CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

STATE MUSEUM, LUCKNOW
LIBRARY

Acc. No._____

Book No._____

709.54

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

OPINIONS

'The Foundation of Indian Art and Archaeology' by Sri Apurva Prakash is the product of much labour and study on the part of the author. He has brought to his task a special qualification as a trained practical artist. The foundations of Indian Art he has rightly sought in the inspiration of India's philosophy, religion and view of life. A historical treatment of the subject from the palaeolithic up to the modern times adds to the value of the volume for purpose of reference. Some controversial points of Indian artistic evolution have been ably dealt with. The book was worthy of a better get-up. It also called for an abundance of illustrations which it was not possible to furnish in these difficult days of printing and publication. The writer deserves encouragement for the promise of the present work which has been executed by him as a devotee of Indian Art, renouncing all other profitable occupations in life.

Dr. Radhakumud Mookerji, M.A., P.R.S., Ph.D.,
M.L.C., Itihasa-Siromani (Baroda)
Professor and Head of the Department of History,
9. 2. '43 Lucknow University.

I have read 'The Foundation of Indian Art and Archaeology' by Sri Apurva Prakash, with much pleasure and profit. It narrates as a simple story the complex currents and cross-currents of thoughts about Indian Art. The author has attempted to ground himself into the fundamental art-motive that stimulates the artist and gives his work a meaning. He is carrying forward in this the method of art-interpretation and art-appreciation initiated by Havell and Coomaraswamy. The book is well-written and may be read with profit by all.

Dr. N. N. Sen Gupta, M.A., Ph. D. (Harvard),
Professor and Head of the Department of Philosophy,
22. 11. '42. Lucknow University.

I have much pleasure in reading Sri Apurva Prakash's 'The Foundation of Indian Art and Archaeology' which I find to be a fresh, lucid and original treatment of a most interesting subject. The author has done full justice to the spiritual interpretation of Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina icons; and his account of the development of Indian Sculpture and Painting also shows both insight and historical sense. Above all he has written as an artist, with a knowledge of the techniques, and his artistic judgment has considerably added to the value of this historical survey. All Indian students must know something of Indian Art. Those who are ignorant, must be considered deficient in education. I would regard this book as an excellent and reliable introduction to the study of Indian Art and Archaeology.

Dr. Radha Kamal Mukerjee, M.A , P.R.S., Ph.D.,
Professor and Head of the Department of Economics
1. 11. '42. and Sociology, Lucknow University.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

OPINIONS

I have glanced through Sri A. Prakash's book 'The Foundation of Indian Art and Archaeology'. The author has obviously made a deep study of the subject; his presentation of it is interesting and his interpretation worthy of attention, and above all in harmony with the spirit of Indian Culture. The book is a valuable contribution to the study of this fascinating subject——Indian Art and Archaeology.

Dr. Panna Lall, M. A., D. Litt., C. S. I., C. I. E., I. C. S.,
Adviser to His Excellency the Governor, U. P.

22. 11. '42

EXCERPTS FROM LETTERS

".....The scope of the work seems to be comprehensive. It appears you have written as one with a mission, feeling, as you say, 'as going to pilgrimage'..... In one respect your book is in striking contrast with other books dealing with Indian Art and Archaeology, viz., that it has no illustrations, but perhaps it was not considered necessary by you, as you seem to be dealing more with the philosophical background of Indian Art than with the form. In some respects your book strikes a new line and some of your interpretations of symbols are very interesting.....On the whole, I should welcome your book as a distinct contribution to the study of Indian Art and Archaeology."

Rao Bahadur K. N. Dikshit, M.A., F.R.A.S.B.,
Director-General of Archaeology in India.

24. 10. '42.

".....Your book is a veritable history of Indian culture. You show the gradual evolution of Indian ideas and ideals, specially in the religious field. As such it deserves to be studied carefully. One of the important merits of your book is that you supply in each of your earlier chapters a philosophical angle from which you review the growth of Indian artistic expression. It is possible for some scholars to cavil at it but I am afraid, in the discussion of Indian artistic evolution, this cannot be left out. The philosophical link gave the sense of continuity to Indian Art in its various aspects, and its omission from any book dealing with the history of it is bound to lead it to a serious defect. So I feel, you have done well in giving it prominence in your book. It is possible, here and there, to differ from your views and even to question them but it is difficult to check the sense of admiration which spontaneously gathers in the mind when one reads your lucid exposition. You have brought Indian cultural thinkers under a debt of gratitude to you....."

N. G. D. Joardar Esq., M.A., B.Ed., Acharya Sastri,
Professor and Head of the Department of English,
Lucknow Christian College.

17. 9. '42

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

913

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

709.54

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Entered
1.5.46
CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh
Provincial Museum, LUCKNOW.
D/56

THE FOUNDATION

OF

INDIAN ART

AND

ARCHAEOLOGY

BY

SRI APURVA PRAKASH

THE ORIENTAL ART PRESS

LUCKNOW

1942

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

COPIES CAN BE HAD OF :-

BANERJEA BROS.
156, PEER JALIL,
LUCKNOW (U.P.)

709.54

All rights reserved by the Author

Price Rs. 12/8

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

त्वमादिदेवः पुरुषः पुराण-
स्त्वमस्य विश्वस्य परं निधानम् ।
वेत्ताऽसि वेद्यं च परं च धाम
त्वया ततं विश्वमनन्तरूप ॥

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

PREFACE

Ere I begin I must confess :
Never could I write, until, unless
Inspired by One to whom dedicate
My work, I with love and respect.

To write on Indian Art and Archaeology is like going on a pilgrimage. The path to the shrine has been dreamt of by me for a long time ; but I had no opportunity of undertaking the journey earlier. Had I been able to devote myself entirely to this work, it should not have taken so many years.

It is very gratifying to find that the interest in Indian Art and Archaeology is growing daily and that quite a number of books on the subject has come out, besides numerous articles in the current periodicals. It cannot be denied that Europe has made a most valuable contribution to research work in this connection. But the Western scholars, generally, undertake to interpret the conflicting views according to the Western angle of vision. The Indians are also turning their attention to place the right kind of material before a world whose thirst for knowledge is insatiable, but the attempt is, as yet, a very weak one, directed more to appealing to the Western mind than to serious efforts requiring hard work and and critical acumen. Moreover, in spite of the fairly large volume of literature that has grown round Indian Art and Archaeology, many of their aspects are still not properly understood, and further clarification of them is needed. So, what I have endeavoured to do is to present a broad survey of the whole field from the point of view of a scientific observer who has a heart as well as a mind, and seeks to share his personal convictions with his fellow beings. I have thrown adequate light on the principles on which Indian Art is based, and even upon the sources from which its aim and ideal are derived. There is a general historical sequence in the order of the chapters. Attempt has been made to develop the subjects in the style of a text book, in which each chapter has to be comprehended before the next can be understood.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

I have aimed, throughout, at the presentation of an ungarnished account of the growth and gradual development of the religious ideas interconnected with the evolution of Art in India. I hope that they will meet the needs of my readers desirous of obtaining a clear knowledge of the gradual process of the development of Indian sculpture and painting from their early simplicity to the complexity which they exhibit at present.

For invaluable aid in the preparation of this book, I am indebted to the published works of others. My footnotes and quotations will indicate the books which have helped me. But my main material has been derived from my experience as a Shilpa Acharya. I acknowledge all my more personal obligations though it is almost impossible, for so many persons have kindly helped me in one way or another. For the many mistakes and misprints that have crept in the present edition, the responsibility is entirely mine, and I shall do my best to remedy the same in the next edition. I shall also welcome further assistance for its improvement from my helpful critics and generous collaborators in the field of Indian Art and Archaeology.

A. P.

Lucknow
Easter Monday, 1942.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CONTENTS

		Page
Introduction		*i*
Chapter		
I.	Detriments to Indian Sculptures and Paintings	1
II.	Surface Strangeness in Subjective Indian Art	7
III.	Indian Artist and his Characteristics	12
IV.	Lithic Age and Indian Art	15
V.	Pre-Vedic Age and Indian Art	18
VI.	The Vedic Aryans and Indian Art	24
VII.	The Upanishadic Age and Indian Art	31
VIII.	Buddhism and Indian Art	35
IX.	Stupa	41
X.	The Law of Karma; the Jatakas; and Donation	45
XI.	The Bhagavatas and the Gita	49
XII.	The Three Stages	53
XIII.	Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhism	57
XIV.	The Origin of the Buddha-Image	61
XV.	Subjective and Objective Indian Art	64
XVI.	Symbolism in Indian Art	71
XVII.	Pre-Mauryan Sculptures	79
XVIII.	Sculptural Monuments of Asoka's Reign	82
XIX.	Sculptures of the Sunga Period	87
XX.	Buddha Gaya	89
XXI.	Barhut	91
XXII.	Sanchi	94
XXIII.	Sarnath	99
XXIV.	Mathura	107
XXV.	Amaravati	114
XXVI.	Gandhara	119

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Chapter		Page
XXVII.	Indian Art in the Gupta Period	149
XXVIII.	Indian Art in the Mediaeval Period	154
XXIX.	The Pauranic Brahmanical Pantheon	157
XXX.	The Mahayana Pantheon	166
XXXI.	The Jaina Pantheon	169
XXXII.	Significance of Ancient and Mediaeval Indian Sculptures	195
XXXIII.	Pictorial Art in Ancient and Mediaeval India	198
XXXIV.	Legacies of Ancient and Mediaeval Indian Painting	202
XXXV.	The Shilpa Shastras	208
XXXVI.	The Result of the Brahmanical Tyranny	214
XXXVII.	Indian Art in the Mughal Period	217
XXXVIII.	Artists of the Mughal Period	226
XXXIX.	Paintings of the Mughal Period	228
XL.	Objective Indian Art after the Fall of the Mughal Empire	236
XLI.	The Bengal School of Painting	239
XLII.	Modern Indian Art and Rabindranath Tagore	244

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

INTRODUCTION

THE foundation of Indian Art and Archaeology cannot be exactly comprehensible if we part asunder the history of Indian Art into periods and treat them as water-tight compartments wholly independent of each other. There is no lack of special works dealing with the particular periods disjointly. But their periodical limits are arbitrary. No line of disconnection can be drawn between them. A careful study of Indian Art from the very beginning up to the Age of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, would reveal that the current from stage to stage was never a catastrophic change, but a natural course of evolution. The characteristics of one period gradually developed from those of the preceding one without any abrupt break. Notwithstanding the endless invasions, vanquishments, tyrannies, persecutions, holocausts, religious controversies, and political earthquakes of more than two thousand years, India maintained one continuous development of her own which is reflected in her sculptures and paintings. Almost all the European writers on Indian Art are grievously marred by their erroneous assumption that distinct Buddhist, Brahmanical, Jaina, and Muslim Arts took place and still exist in India. Like opinions are unfortunately still widely accepted by the Indian authors on Indian Art. In the whole circle of Indian Art these writers are unable to observe something which does subtly unite all its seeming segments, a unity that underlies all its bewildering variety. To me a book on Indian Art treating either Buddhist, Jaina, Brahmanical or Mughal Art alone, is a preposterous and ridiculous treatise. It can never do full justice either to the aim of Indian Art or to the general effect. The connections between them are so close and interdependent that they have become essential acts of the one and the same drama. They cannot stand apart from the main current of the evolution of Indian Art. The history of Indian Art is not a mere chronological description of sculptures and paintings; but it is the activity of the Idea or Spirit endeavouring to realise itself through them. With the perception of this unity which runs through every stage and

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

every movement, the achievement of Indian Art falls into coherent perspective.

Indian Art, looking to it as a whole is perfectly self-evolved, self-contained, and independent of all extraneous admixture. The general tendency of the modern writers has been to ignore this truth. They go so far as either to deny or to minimise the immense importance of Indian Art in the history of human culture. The people who have had their thoughts and sentiments habitually trained by one particular set of artistic dogmas, frequently misjudge the value of those thoughts that are strange and unfamiliar to them. They are to a great extent vitiated with prejudices, superstitions, and fanatical beliefs, which since childhood, have been pumped into their receptive minds, before they were sufficiently developed and could form independent judgments. This fact miserably spoils their purity of sentiment and obscures their transparency of intellect. For many years the originality of Indian Art received scant appreciation from them. Then came the time when some of them realised that nothing can be further from truth and no graver or more grotesque distortion or disfigurement of verity can be conceived than to deny the absolute originality in Indian Art. But still they could not emancipate themselves entirely from the innate tendency. They tried to seek foreign elements in Indian sculptures and paintings, though ultimately they found their attempt far removed from proof. To hide facts is not to find a remedy. As we all know, the hare, when hunted by dogs, buries its head in the earth and thinks itself safe; these distinguished modern writers did just like the hare! They clearly omitted facts that conflicted their 'Borrowing Theory'. They overestimated the wrong phase which specially interested them. But this is not a remedy. It seems to me that either they were so prejudiced that even seemingly self-evident truths were not comprehended by them or they had obstinately propagated their perverted views against especially Indian Art. Their wrong assumptions regarding especially foreign elements, induce me to digress in this introductory part and to clear their misconceptions from the very radix.

Historical evidences attest that Indian Artists played a very important part in the diffusion of Indian Art outside India. The friendly relations with the ruling princes of India had provided Darius the necessary opportunity for the importation of Indian Artists for

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Preservation Foundation, Chandigarh

building and decorating his palace at Susa. It is mentioned in the Mahavamsa that craftsmen and a thousand families of the eighteen guilds were sent by a Pandyan King from Madura to Ceylon in the time of Vijaya. Indian Artists were noted for their skill. In the rare periods of peace they were free to take service under any prince or noble who could show them the most generous patronage. But this need of Indian Artists for executing great public works of this kind became, in course of time, one of the motives for depredatory expeditions. In times of war or invasion the Indian Artists began to be treated as treasured chattels, sometimes bartared as part of an indemnity. More often they were carried away to distant lands to grace the capital of the conquerer. Mahmud of Ghazni who massacred wholesale men, women, and children of the general Indian population, usually spared the Indian Artists who were always the prizes of war. After his return from expedition, laden with immense booty, he followed the usual custom of employing the Indian Sculptors and Architects who were among his prisoners in making his own capital vie in splendour with the great cities of India he had spoiled. Thus the Great Mosque of Ghazni, known as 'Celestial Bride,' built of marble and granite, furnished with rich carpets and with lamps and candelabra of gold and silver, was the work of Indian Artists. In 1398 when Timur the ancestor of the Mughal Dynasty, withdrew his hordes from Northern India after ravaging it with fire and sword, he took back with him as captives hundreds of Indian Sculptors and Architects to build a mosque at Samarkand similar to the famous mosque at Ferozabad, and to decorate the cities on the Oxus. In 1739 when the Persian monarch Nadir Shah sacked Delhi, the first inroad was made on the Imperial Library of Mughal manuscripts and Indian miniatures which he carried away to Teheran with the rest of his vast treasure. Some bearing the seals of Jehangir and Shah Jehan as well as evidences of a temporary sojourn in Persia and later in Constantinople, have found homes in Paris, Berlin, Leningrad, and Vienna. Thus, if we proceed to examine such political events we shall be able to appreciate correctly the influence of Indian Artists and the marked effect on the sculptures and pictorial art of the countries situated outside India. It is very often mentioned by the European writers on Indian Art that two peoples can hardly live side by side for a long period without a certain amount of mutual borrowing. But they always forget that India has been always

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

the dominant partner especially in the sphere of Fine Arts. The outsiders had the Artist's eye but not the Artist's hand. And therefore they used to take away to their own countries Indian Sculptors and Painters who spread their own ideas and motifs there. In this manner was brought about that similarity which is noticeable in the sculptures and paintings of India and those of other countries outside India. The existence of Indian elements and influences traceable in the arts of foreign countries will be thoroughly understood after and not before we have achieved a correct understanding of the internal development of Indian Art.

Indian Art is at first sight most puzzling. It will ever remain alien and baffling to our pragmatic mind until we understand the foundation and evolution of it. There will be a marked difference of opinion among the Archaeologists so long as they do not view Indian Art from its beginning up to the present day as an undivided whole. They cannot have the complete idea that animates Indian Art. Every sculpture or painting in India touches that idea. If the Archaeologists realise that pervading idea, every piece of Indian sculptures and paintings becomes radiantly significant by the light of the whole. But if they go on interminably, never caring for the idea of the whole, only throwing off disconnected pieces, it becomes wearisome and unprofitable in the extreme.

A systematic study of Indian sculptures and paintings would bring its ideal into vital relation with our every-day life. It will satisfy not only our individual needs, but also the problems, the difficulties and the needs of our age. It will bring about a unity in this present vast mass of heterogeneous population of India containing various races with different levels of culture.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER ONE

DETRIMENTS TO INDIAN SCULPTURES AND PAINTINGS.

Of the great numbers of Indian sculptures and paintings executed since the dawn of Indian Art, only a few have survived. Their losses are due to various causes :

Climatic Action.

The climatic action of India is, unfortunately most unsuitable for the preservation of monuments. All that was of wood was condemned beforehand to fall into dust. The destruction of lithic monuments in India is generally attributed to the foreign vandals. Yet even in the comparatively accessible sites archaeological evidence suggests that the extent of the ravages of the foreign depredators may have been over-estimated. Sir Aurel Stein formed the impression that the disfigurement of the sculptures unearthed at Sahri Bahlol in 1912 was due to natural causes, rather than iconoclasm. A large proportion of the damage consists in a lateral slicing of the stone parallel to the flat face of the relief, leaving a smooth plane of cleavage across the salient parts of the carving. Such slicing is frequent, for instance, in the hands and faces of the figures. It is possible that when the coating of paint which at first protected the sculptures against the elements had worn off, water might seep into the cracks of the stone and a succession of heavy frosts eventually cause a cleaveage.

Foreigners' Vandalism.

Nearly all, that were of stone and that the natural causes might have spared, have been destroyed by the vandalism of invaders. What Indian scluptures and paintings lost by the tide of vandalism and religious antagonism is beyond comprehension. All the sacred monuments along with the sculptures and paintings with which they were so lavishly decorated show unmistakable traces of destruction. The very accessibility of their sites, close to mediaeval and modern routes, exposed them to the depredations of builders and iconoclasts. So many different conquerors forced their way through the border region towards the wide plains of Hindustan that it is difficult to fix the blame on any one vandal in particular. The great trade route was the highway along which the rapacious invaders from the north-west pushed on towards the wealthy cities in the plains of the Jumna and Ganges. The whole fury of their attack fell on the monasteries and temples not because they were places of worship and seats of idols, but because they were repositories of India's age-

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

long accumulated wealth. The real object of the earlier invaders was not the monasteries or temples, but the fabulous wealth they contained and their main motive was mundane—greed for gold. The Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang who travelled through Gandhara about 630 A. D., was told that the cruel Hun King namely Mihirakula, had ransacked and destroyed the Buddhist monasteries of Gandhara, a century before. The Objective School of Gandhara sculptures seems to have lingered on for a few hundred years but the destruction of the monasteries was a disaster from which it never recovered. The destruction of temples and places of worship is neither enjoined nor countenanced but emphatically forbidden by Islam. But the number of bodiless heads and headless bodies suggests that iconoclasm at least played its part in the destruction of the sculptures. The idol hating Muslim armies ruthlessly burnt and reduced the splendid establishments at Sarnath to irretrievable ruin. The town of Bhilsa was thrice sacked by Muslim conquerors, and its temples destroyed for a fourth time in the reign of Aurangzeb. In the north-western India and Rajputana thousands of Hindu temples have been destroyed by the armies of Islam during the seven centuries intervening between the raids of Mahmud of Ghazni and the death of Aurangzeb. Consequently, Indian sculptures of the medieval period are scarce in those territories. India at the time of Mahmud of Ghazni was a veritable museum of fine and applied art. Paintings existed on the walls of the magnificent buildings, and that they did not escape the desecrating hand of Mahmud may be inferred. In the fourteenth century Firoz Shah Tughlaq showed a marked antipathy to the paintings of the Hindus. He deliberately destroyed their paintings because in this form of art 'figures and especially pagan saints' predominated. Owing to the destruction wrought by the Muslims who overran and held in strength almost every part of the Gupta Empire, few remains of the Gupta period exist above ground, except in out of the way localities. The Buddhist buildings in Mathura have been destroyed so ruthlessly that no data are left for the reconstruction even of their ground plan. Aurangzeb's destruction of the works of art included the two statues of elephants with their riders which guarded the main gateways to the Delhi Fort. The pictures in the Asar Mahal at Bijapur were defaced being offensive to the bigotted Muslims like Aurangzeb. Manucci writes that there were drawings of human figures in Akbar's tomb at Sikandra. Over them Aurangzeb ordered a coat of white wash to be applied so that the drawings might not be seen. We must not forget to note in this connection that in the

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Preservation Foundation, Chandigarh

destruction of Indian sculptures, even the Portuguese had taken a part. In the Main Cave of Elephanta, we find Siva as the killer of demon (andhakasura-vadha-murti) represented with eight arms. The front right and left hands were broken by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century and the others have suffered since.

Thus nation after nation have poured their myriads into Hindustan and pulled down the monuments of Indian sculptures and paintings But they certainly produced no considerable effect on Indian Art. On the ruins of the past new specimens arose which show that the current of Indian Art cannot be checked or suppressed. The sketchy information which we possess, suggests that Indian Civilisation was though repeatedly shaken by the nomads, yet its course was fundamentally unaltered by their inroads or their ephemeral empires. What really renders Indian Art so interesting as a subject of study is this that it has always pursued a constant goal since the dawn. Even the Muslim rule in India was equally without appreciable influence on Indian Art which continued its isolated course with its aim unchanged. Although deeply affected politically and economically by the impact of Islam, Indian Artists were spiritually unaffected by the presence of the foreign rulers.

Indolence of the Natives

Considerable monumental groups, remained only where the districts subsequently became deserted. Situated in a remote and thinly peopled part of India they had not been exposed to the destructive energy of opposing sects of an Indian religion, and the bigotted Muslims had not wanted their materials for the erection of their mosques. While the nobler and more extensive groups of monuments had been swept from the face of the earth, these monuments survived for the time being. Later on they also suffered but this time at the hands of the shameless natives of India. The Barhut Stupa and its sculptures almost entirely disappeared, having been utilised by the rustic natives to build their villages. Only one half of the rail, which was partly thrown down and buried in the rubbish has been preserved. The monuments of Sanchi have been partly destroyed by the neighbouring villagers quarrying for bricks and stones. The Asoka Pillar or Lat near the South Gateway was broken into several pieces by a local zemindar who was endeavouring to cut up and utilize its shaft in a sugar-cane press. The stump, however, still remains in situ, and the larger sections of the shaft have been laid alongside it, while the crowning lions, sadly disfigured, are standing near shrine No. 17. The most venerable monument of Sarnath, the

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

ancient Maurya stupa fell a victim to the cupidity of Jagat Singh, Diwan of Chait Singh, the Raja of Benares. As the new quarter of Benares, named Jagat Gunj after the spoiler, rose into being, the ancient Dharmarajika disappeared down to its foundations. And most of the sculptures which remained behind together with most of the carved stones found by Cunningham were used by an utilitarian-spirited official of the name of Davidson to strengthen the Barna bridge. The Reverend Sherring in his well-known book "The Sacred City of the Hindus" mentions that in the erection of one of the bridges over the Barna (viz., Duncan's bridge), forty-eight statues and other sculptured stones were removed from Sarnath and thrown into the river, to serve as a break-water to the piers, and that in the erection of the second bridge, the iron one, from fifty to sixty cartloads of stones from the Sarnath buildings were employed. The Stupas of Amaravati had lain buried under the dust of ages. But a petty raja selected a neighbouring spot on the river Kistna for a new residence, and he found in the Buddhist shrine a welcome means of supplying himself at small cost, with excellent building material. Not only was the entire stupa razed to the ground but also the exquisitely sculptured pillars and panels were ruthlessly demolished and partly, it seems, even burnt to lime. The largest of the stupas, containing the most important remains, have been used as querries for brick and marble not only by the rustic natives, but also by the Government Public Works Engineers, the record of whose vandalism is more deplorable. The ancient building was so thoroughly levelled with the ground that the modern excavators are not even able to reconstruct the original ground plan with absolute certainty. The place where it had stood is merely indicated by a circular pit of about seventy-five yards in diameter. Another instance of the destruction of monuments of Indian Art by the Indians themselves, ought to be mentioned in this connection. The tombs of Jehangir, Nurjehan, and Asaf Khan were damaged by the Sikhs when Ranjit Singh removed their marbles and employed them in the construction of his own buildings. If this kind of thing goes on, all the interest of the Indians to lay the blame only on the foreign vandals may serve to defeat its own purpose.

Blundering Excavations.

The system of archaeological excavation has reached a much higher level to-day than before. The widespread interest which the discovery and successive accounts of the Buddhist stupas excited, had proved lamentably disastrous to the monuments themselves. The sites quickly became hunting grounds for treasure seekers and amateur

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Preservation Foundation, Chandigarh

archaeologists, who spared no effort to enrich themselves from the spoils supposed to be hidden there. Their carelessly conducted search for supposed treasure did immense damage to the structures of the stupas and hastened the dilapidation of their enclosures, while no discovery compensated in any way for the destruction. Nearly all the sites in Swat have, at one time or another, been burrowed into by treasure-seekers, and a number have been altogether ruined for scientific excavation. Gumbats (Stupas) reduced to stone-heaps, figures torn from their niches, hands and heads from their bodies, friezes chipped and sliced—such is the common tale of early excavation. Of the earlier official excavations, the worst thing was that they were so unsystematically carried on that it is impossible to ascertain where hundreds of the sculptures (now in Lahore Museum) came from. Every year new officer was appointed in charge of the party of sappers, not because he had any experience on the subject or any taste for Archaeology, but because he had grand record in military service. The result was, as usually expected, painfully disappointing. M. Foucher adds: "Hardly anywhere were the excavators at the trouble to unearth the buildings to the foundations in order to determine their plans or restore the scheme of their decoration; their only care was to lay hands on the sculptures; and they took no trouble to put aside or protect pieces that were thought too heavy or too fragmentary for removal. In many places trunks and mutilated reliefs strew the clearings and testify to the ignorance and brutalite with which the excavations were conducted ....." The earlier image collectors very often separated the images from their pedestals for the sake of convenience in transport. The result is that there are now a large number of loose pieces of the lower member, but it is not possible to make out to which particular images they belong. The idea of repairing and preserving those incomparable structures seem never to have entered the heads of those blundering excavators. It was not until 1881 when the British Government bethought of safe-guarding the original structures. The tasks of preserving the monuments which were crumbling to ruin, exhuming from their debris the monasteries, temples and other edifices, or protecting the hundreds of loose sculptures and inscriptions lying scattered, have been systematically undertaken since 1912.

Conclusion.

The monuments of Indian Art and Archaeology are, thus, far from numerous. A great number of them have been destroyed by men of different faiths. It is, therefore, exceedingly difficult to represent a gradation or to date the separate monuments which appear as independent groups, and place them in their

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

historical context as parts of a continuous story. Dating generally depend on inscriptions, the most satisfactory of all kinds of evidence. But inscribed sculptures are very often of dubious value for our purpose, owing to the controversies which still surround attempts to 'fix' Indian eras. In some cases (two Patna Statues) the inscription appears to have been added later. On mere assumption that the Jogimara Cave paintings were contemporary with the short inscription in the early Brahmi character engraved on the wall of the Cave, Dr. Bloch assigned the whole to the third century B. C. It is very doubtful, however, if the record in question is so ancient and equally doubtful if the frescoe has any connexion with it. In some other cases the inscribed stone which might have belonged to some building which had fallen into decay, or have been the pedestal of some statue which had been disused, was consequently utilised in the erection or repair of another structure. General Cunningham found such stone on which was engraved " Ye dharma hetu....." when he excavated the Dhamek stupa at Sarnath. When the dated eras are not sufficiently defined, inferences are drawn from the form of Alphabet used. But when neither the dated inscriptions nor considerations of alphabet enable the archaeologists to determine the chronological sequence of the sculptures with any approach to certainty, they resort to the style of the sculptures. The general rule they follow is that the simplest are the oldest, and the most elaborate are the latest. But the compositions are frequently so complex that certainty leaves the door open for the most daring hypothesis. The principle of gradual improvement is a priori so thoroughly established that it cannot be reasonably questioned, but it is hazardous to apply it to isolated cases. One building of one age may be poorer than another of a later age. It cannot, therefore, be accepted as a proof positive of the former age having been lower in the scale of architectural art-excellence than the latter until it is proved that the former never had and could not produce anything better. Superiority in sculpture much depends upon wealth as on artistic ingenuity and in the ratio in which wealth is withheld the quality of sculpture must deteriorate. The capacity or taste of the individual sculptor engaged and the honesty of the agent employed to superintend the disbursement of money, are important factors in the calculation of the result. These are doubtless trite axioms, unfit to be repeated, but in the domain of Indian Art and Archaeology they are not always remembered by the connoisseures.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER TWO

SURFACE STRANGENESS IN SUBJECTIVE INDIAN ART

Of the many problems that have perplexed the intellect of man in modern times, the most intricate is the surface strangeness in Indian Art. A little girl, taken to see the Indian sculptures in a museum, was asked to regard a bronze statue of an Indian deity. Then shyly she asked. "Why has he six arms?" That was the modern mind speaking. How many of us pass through the archaeological galleries without ever feeling the necessity for such a question? Both the western observers as well as the modern Indians are dismayed by this surface strangeness in Indian Art. They are unable to understand why anatomical accuracy is disregarded by the Indian artists; why the body is flattened out and distorted, the limbs are made severely angular, and the feet and the folded hands of the devotees being on the same plane are invariably placed sideways. Why is the composition very much condensed? Why are incidents happening at different times and at different places thus squeezed into one and the same relief? Why are the figures shown as of equal height, irrespective of their mutual distance, thus ignoring what a perspective treatment would demand? Why is little attempt made to delineate human feelings, so that the figures are practically devoid of expression and look all alike? These are the peculiarities of Indian Art that have excited the resentment of many and are apt to distract even the discerning. Western critics jump to the conclusion that the Indian artists can neither draw nor model the human figure correctly, although Indian life give far better opportunities for the study of the nude than the artists have in Europe. Feeble or defective emotion, according to them, is the only explanation of unsatisfactory form. 'If the forms are satisfactory, the state of mind that ordained them must have been aesthetically right. The forms that are splayed out and distorted, and the force of mental abstraction on the part of the artist, are always a sure sign of rudimentary work. The monstrous shapes of the Indian images are unsuitable for the higher forms of artistic representation.' Regarding the so-called anatomical inaccuracy in Indian Art the western art critics remark that male figures are sadly wanting in muscles; the calves, arms, breasts, shoulders, in short the whole body is rounded, soft, and plump, like that of a woman. They criticise that the generalized treatment of the body and limbs is a violent departure from the facts of nature. 'Talent regarding anatomical

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

accuracy exists only in a limited degree among the Indian Artists ; the feeling for well proportioned composition is wanted.'

Judged by the western standards, figures or images in Subjective Indian Art suffer from many imperfections; the face is expressionless; the figure is devoid of anatomical detail ; there is nothing to indicate that the figures possessed either veins, muscles or bones, and may be described as crude. Subjective Indian Art does not aim at giving a picture of the world as it is beheld by the eye. The subjective Indian artist does not sit down in front of his model and reproduce as closely as possible the reflection of it on the retina of his own eyes, but that after the most careful observation he goes away to record his mental impression of it. He sees a landscape, a garden, or a face ; he imitates the model impressed upon his mind. Here, the western mind would ask. What was the use, if the artist had a sitter for his likeness in front of him, of his going away to record his mental impression of the sitter? Why not record it then and there? In other words, why does the artist not resort to models instead of using a mental construction ?

Now let us find out the root cause of this surface-strangeness in Indian Art. If we proceed to examine the definition, aim and function of Indian Art, we shall see that the root cause of surface strangeness is hidden there. I am not disposed to dispute the correctness of the types of definitions and aims of Indian Art as hitherto given by the so-called art connoisseurs of India. But I am sorry to say that their statements hitherto are not accurate enough to explain the root cause of surface strangeness, clearly. Sometimes their statements are extremely fanciful, exoteric and sadly inadequate. In my opinion, whatever aims we may place before the Indian Artists as working ideals such as happiness, morality, faith, fortune, duty, or other ends, partial fallacy shadows them all. But there is one conscious purpose to which all their activity is ultimately directed and that is the discovery and grasping of the ultimate reality. It is that reality, the finding of a unity towards which we are all going. It is not simply a philosophical speculation for India ; it is her life-object to realise the fundamental unity in feeling and in action. Every action of our lives. the most material, the grossest as well as the finest, the highest, the most spiritual is alike tending towards this one ideal, the finding of unity. Atoms after atoms combine making huge balls, the earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, and the planets. They in their turn are trying to rush towards each other and at last the whole universe, mental and material will be fused into one. The process that is going on in the cosmos, on a

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

large scale, is the same as is going on in the microcosm. on a smaller scale. Just as this universe has its existence in separation, in distinction, and all the while is rushing towards unity, non-separation, so in our little worlds, each soul is born, as it were, cut off the rest of the world. But as the highest knowledge comes, man grows, morality is evolved and the idea of non-separateness begins. Reality subsists in the common unity of being and this reality is the aim of all our sciences in whatever time or place. Take the science of Chemistry, for instance. Chemists are seeking to resolve all known substances into their original elements. and then if possible, to find the one element from which all these are derived. No wonder, the Indian Artist too wants to express or represent this ultimate reality—that changeth not, dieth not, something which in the midst of this world of misery and death is eternal, blissful and undying. Indian Artist looks out upon the external world as a bridge to contemplation. He is always to enlarge his consciousness in order to get gleams of the inner reality and it is his gift to represent the infinite in term of the finite within the bounds of colour and form. His success lies in enabling the beholder to feel His oneness wih the harmonious oneness at the source of life. God split Himself, His Oneness into the manyness of the Universe, in creating diversity out of His Oneness, in manifesting Himself in many phases, so there arose in the heart of the Indian Artist the urge to represent the Oneness, out of His manyness, unity out of its multiplicity, the Infinite out of its finitude. It is the spirit in him that is responding to the spirit in the universe, the deep calling unto the deep. Unity in variety is the plan of Indian Art.

Let us now deduce the results of our conclusion that in India. Art means the revelation of the Ekamev-advitiyam the One without the second. The more duplicacy in expression, the less does Indian Art approach its own perfection. This is one of the reasons why handicraft is classed as fine art in India. In handicraft, however clever the artist may be, it is absolutely impossible for him to manufacture two articles identically alike. Evidently it is impossible to imitate a work of art exactly, and the differences between the copy and the original, minute though they may be, exist and are felt immediately. But why is it impossible to make an absolute exact copy? The explanation seems to be that the actual lines and colours and spaces in a work of Indian Art are caused by something in the mind of the artist which is not present in the mind of the imitator. The original and the copy differ because that which ordered the work of art does not preside at the manufacture of copy. It may be

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

mentioned in this connection that the great men of India are against machines, not because they are crushing down millions and that one becoming richer than the rest, and thus making slaves of the whole masses of human beings, but because they are crushing down the Art of India. The difference between a hand-made object and a machine made article lies in this that the one has the art behind it and the other nothing of that to its credit. Indian civilisation can survive without machine-industry but cannot live without Art—the Ekamev-advitiyam.

The philosophy which inspires the Indian Artist and declares that the only reality is the Ekamev-advitiyam, regards all that we see in the external world as transitory, illusive phenomena or 'Maya.' To the extent that the work of Subjective Indian Art is true to external world and the more its verisimilitude approximates to that of the natural model, the more the work becomes illusionistic. It is for this reason that the Subjective Indian Artist does not transcribe laboriously the physical types of actual forms of men, women, animals, etc. Of course, the elements from which the artist creates his work of art are taken from nature, but they are the alphabets out of which he moulds by the deliberate exertion of his mind the lines and forms by which he conveys the Ekamev-advitiyam. The love of nature in its infinite beauty and variety certainly appeals to imagination of the Subjective Indian Artist but the forms do not impel him to represent them realistically. Some Indian Art-critics have hitherto explained that an Indian Artist is not concerned to draw all the details clearly or does not need to cross his T's and dot his i's, because he knows his audience. But I would like to tell them that an Indian Artist does not proceed in this boldest and broadest manner, unless he is sure that a mere suggestion of his own thought will evoke a response from his audience, just as a note of music finds a response in every wire tuned to the same pitch through which the vibration passes. For, if the majority of his observers demand from the Indian Artist not imagination and ideas but facts only facts which they can understand at the very first sight, he will have no right to refuse them unless he has some ideal before him. The real cause of the violent departure from the facts of nature in Subjective Indian Art is that sensuous appearance is regarded as maya or illusion. The aim of an Indian Subjective Artist is not to depict transient aspects of natural objects but to represent the eternal essence in them, that is not to mistake the 'maya' for reality. The Subjective Indian Art cannot be a life-like replica of natural species or merely a source of pleasureable sensations because it is a manner of speaking

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

only about the eternal reality. The Subjective Indian Artists ignore the precision of anatomical proportions of human figures. because the external form is the ephemeral garment of the soul. They are always aiming at something quite other than the copying of body. It is due to this ideal before them that they devote all care and attention to the contemplative nature of their work and do not pay attention to the finishing of other muscular details. The absence of the laws of linear perspective from their work indicates the same cause. Perspective is the means employed to convey to the spectator the idea of three dimensional space. But let us not forget that both time and space are transient and are, therefore, eliminated in Subjective Indian Art. Incidents happening at different times and at different places are, therefore, squeezed into one and the same relief. The figures are shown as of equal height, irrespective of their mutual distance thus ignoring what a perspective treatment would demand. The figures appear quite unaffected by the environment and are regardless of one another. Through the means of light and shade we become sensible of every undulation of surface and every variation of contour in the objects. But in Indian pictorial art all the parts or figures are equally bathed in light, no corner is dark and fully rounded each object shines forth. The reason is that light is represented as coming not from any particular direction outside but from within. Consequently there are no shadows, and there is hardly any shading. To complain of the inattention or incapacity of the Indian Artists to the rules of perspective, of the lack of light and shade effects, of chiaroscuro, etc., means to start criticism without understanding the aim and ideal of Indian Art.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER THREE

INDIAN ARTIST AND HIS CHARACTERISTICS

Artists are popularly marked out as worshippers of beauty. Such description is only partly true. The real meaning of the word 'Artist,' in my estimation, is somewhat different. Art, in India, means the Ekamev-advitiyam the one unrivalled truth. The suffix 'ist' in English denotes one who adheres to stick fast or cleave as a glutinous substance does. And, therefore, the whole word 'Artist' (= Art + ist) means one who has become united with the Ekamev-advitiyam. In other words, he whose only desire or ishta is the Ekamev-advitiyam, the highest truth, is an artist. Similarly, in my opinion the word 'Vaskar' (sculptor) means he who has obtained the glimpse or 'abhas' of His existence (akar). In the same way the Pali word 'Chittakar' (Chitrakar—in Sanskrit) means one who has felt His existence (akar) in his heart (chitta) or who has painted (chitrita) His existence (akar). The knowledge of the inner reality in an object cannot be obtained by merely empirical observation or reflex registration but only when the knower and the known, seer and seen, art and ist meet in an act transcending distinction.

The desire of the Indian Artist to represent the truth is obstructed by the sheaths or veils which the Ekamev-advitiyam has put around Himself. The mind acquires the habits of its environment, becomes familiar with its new surroundings, thus adding on to its originally pure and real self more and more layers of illusory experience. The heavily laden atmosphere of cities and towns, where everything is luxurious and sensual, where the individual is constantly under the menace of disgrace, enshrouds the Indian Artist's soul in the darkness of limitations. The simple existence and dwelling in woods, caves, and villages, therefore, lured the ancient Indian Artist more and more. There he could commune with Nature to find the secret of the universal life by meditating on the ultimate Perfection. But this was practised by the higher artists only. The Mundaka Upanishad recommends retirement to such places as essential for those who seek 'the highest knowledge, para- vidya, Vedanta, the knowledge of the Atman. Others abounded where riches abounded following the course of trade and manufacture; where applause and respect followed the execution of meritorious works; where civic pride was excited, and the records of cities were embellished by the preservation of particulars concerning the circumstances under which the leading monuments of the state were called into being.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

The Punyasala inscription proves that these workmen and traders in Ancient India enjoyed an advanced state of corporate life. They were organised into guilds which not only looked to the welfare of their members but also served as banks for deposit of permanent endowments. The members of the technical corporations recognized no distinction of sect. so far as their business was concerned.

Indian sculptures and paintings are generally anonymous. The identity of an Indian artist is merged in his own Art. When the knower and the known, seer and seen, Art and ist become one, we can neither specify the artist nor the work. Art is the only reward for an Indian Artist. His own individual personality is completely merged in his Art and therefore the masterpiece is unsigned. It is the common belief both in the East aud West that Art is not the creation of the artist but is revealed to him. All the works of Art are thought of as having a divine origin and as having been revealed or brought down from heaven to earth. In the Srimad Bhagavad Gita, the Blessed Lord said, "Graciously have I shown to thee, O Arjuna, this Form supreme....." The prophet Christ when he begins his message, "Thus saith the Lord....." is giving utterance to his consciousness that the message is not his own, that it comes from a wider and deeper level of life and from a source outside his limited self. It was for this reason that St. Paul said that it was not he but God that spoke through him. Plato regards inspiration as an act of the Goddess. Ideas are showered on Philo from above. though he is oblivious of everything around him. George Eliot tells us that she wrote her best work in a kind of frenzy almost without knowing what she was writing. According to Emerson, all poetry is first written in the heavens. Since Artists cannot compel these exceptional moments to occur, all inspiration has something of revelation in it. The Indian Artist considers his vision as the utterance of the Eternal through him. In those rare moments he is in touch with the Ekamev-advitiyam, his own individual soul is joined with the Great Soul. The identification of individual souls (Jivatman) with the Universal Soul (Paramatman) is also noticeable in Indian sculptures and paintings when the final product is a result of the collaboration of many artists. There is no more remarkable illustration of the Indian perception of the relative insignificance of artist's individuality than the fact that we scarcely know the name of a single Indian Artist of the great periods in the history of Indian Art. That is simply an indication of their spirit of self-surrender, to work without attach-

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

ment to the fruits of work, to realise self by resting on the One Supreme Self. Without putting their names they died quietly, leaving their work to posterity. They were the true followers of the Gita ; they practically carried out the great mandate :

"कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।"

"Thy right is to work only ; but never to the fruits thereof."

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER FOUR

LITHIC AGE AND INDIAN ART

The general tendency of the foreign writers on Indian history has been to assume that everything Indian, must have been imported at some remote time from outside India. They cannot bear to look on India as the cradle of mankind, the seat of primaeval wisdom. They maliciously progagate that the Dravidian peoples once dwelt in the highlands of Western Asia and penetrated thence by way of Baluchistan into India. The survival in Baluchistan of a Dravidian language, Brahui seems them to support their view. As regards Baluchistan, the linguistic traits of the Brahuis strike these foreign writers as Dravidian, though it is now certain that the people are Indo-Iranian in ethnic type. Moreover, it is obvious that there is nothing in the culture of the Dravidians that can point to their foreign origin. But these foreign theorists drag large bodies of ancient people along the map of Asia and Europe as easily as chessmen are shifted on the chessboard, and make them wander aimlessly from country to country, merely to support their baseless theories. They construct an itinerary for the wanderings of these people, which is nothing but a specimen of perverse ingenuity without any historical evidence to support it. Like the novelist's chain of circumstantial evidence, conjured up to excite a thrilling interest in the reader, but destined to crumble down by the first touch of truth, such assumptions can result in no ultimate good. While the spell lasts they may amuse, but cannot edify ; and as bearing upon sober facts they are false analogies, calculated to mislead unwary readers and to sap the foundation of true history.

From the anthropological stand-point, Southern India was the heart and centre of the Dravidian zone and there we have the most representative and vital specimens of Dravidian culture and stocks. The linguistic considerations point to the conclusion that the Dravidians were indigenous in the Deccan and spread thence over a part of northern India through the Indus Valley. The fact that primitive representatives of the four existing types of anthropoid apes viz., the Gorilla, the Chimpanzee, the Gibbon, and the Orang-outang, have been discovered in Southern India, proves that here man ought to have risen and flourished in ancient times. The environment that suited these apes must have suited also early man. Moreover, we can depend for evidence of man's early presence in Southern India on his artefacts, i.e., on things made by him. The forests of

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

the Dandakaranyan furnished him with plenty of very hard timber which could be used for the purpose of clubs.

The long lithic stage of human culture is divided into two parts : (1) the Palaeolithic age when man was content to use rough surfaced tools, and (2) the Neolithic Age when he learnt to grind the surfaces of his tools till they become very smooth to the touch. The Palaeolithic remains have been found chiefly in South India. A few implements have been found scattered in Central India and Rajputana and almost none in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Palaeolithic men are sometimes called Quartzite men. Numerous quartzite implements have been found near Madras city and Ongole in Guntur district, and more in Cuddapah. This shows that from the earliest times man flourished in the Deccan. Neolithic implements are distributed over a large part of Southern India. They occur all along the ranges which border the Gangetic Plains. Many examples have been obtained in Gujerat, Sindh, Rajputana, the Punjab, the highlands of Bihar and Bengal. The neolithic people buried their dead. A careful examination of the sites shows that dead men were buried in mud pits or placed in pots before burial. The dead man was placed in a sitting posture in an earthenware pot, the pot was then let into a pit and half filled with sand, and rice and other grains on a tray were placed before the dead body. His stone tools were also inserted at the sides of the pot.

Drawings or carvings made by the palaeolithic Indians on wood, bone and ivory must have been annihilated by the termites (white ants) which are known to have attacked and damaged human erania in ancient Egyptian graves. No such products have survived except the pendants made of teeth found in the Billa Surgam Cave of the Karnool district. Many relics of pottery have been found in neolithic settlements. The neolithic people were interested in varying tints. The pigments they used to paint the different vessels, were shades of red, yellow, brown, and rarely orange and purplish grey. The walls and roofs of the Cave which yield pigmy flints, are sometimes covered with rough drawings in ruddle or haematite. Similar ones, illustrating hunting scenes occur in the Kaimur Range, and it is believed from the primitive outlines of the depicted weapons that some of the drawings are of the neolithic age. Beautiful examples have recently been found in caves near Raigarh in the extreme east of the Central Provinces. A few representations of natural objects on pottery have been met with such as leaf patterns, impressions on printed fillets in vessels representing leaves, imitations of fruits. A decorated chatty of neolithic times has been found

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

on the east side of the great mounds at Gudivada in the Kistna district. Decorated bangles have been recovered in various places. Shell bangles show decorative carvings of various devices on the backs. The love of decoration, painting or tattooing of the body was undertaken for pleasure in order to increase sexual attractiveness and to stand out from one's fellows. A careful study of the scenes crudely drawn on the walls of the caves in the Kaimpur Range and in Central Provinces as well as in the Caves of the Mirzapur district (U. P.), can lead but to one conclusion that hunting scenes were the principal subjects. We find the chase of wild animals, such as rhinoceros and sambar stag graphically portrayed. The neolithic Indians worked in the direction of reproducing the shapes of natural objects with the only motive of decoration or imitation. The real characteristics of Indian Art are not found in their products. Their aim was to imitate, to reproduce the objects and actions observed in nature. Their reproductive expressions cannot come under 'Indian Art.'

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER FIVE

PRE-VEDIC AGE AND INDIAN ART

The Pre-Vedic Age, in India, belongs to the period when the Stone Age had almost but not completely given way to the Metal Age. It was the age when the Pre-Vedic Aryans living at Mohanjo daro (Sindh) and Harappa (Punjab) and some other places in the neighbourhood had developed a culture now known as the Indus Civilization. Mohenjo daro or 'Mounds of the dead' is the local name of a high mound situated in the plains of Larkana district in Sindh. The surface of the Mohenjo daro site is covered by mounds whose heights vary from 70 ft. to 20 ft. The human remains found there bring to light four ethnic types viz., the proto-Australoid, Mediterranean, Mongolian branch of the Alpine and the Alpine. The number of skulls found is too small to warrant a safe generalization regarding the composition of the civic population of that region. They merely suggest that the population of Sindh was cosmopolitan to some extent, due to its international commercial importance. They must not be taken as the authors of the Indus Civilization. The word Harappa itself is analogous to Hariyupiya mentioned in Rgveda. Recent excavations at Mohenjo daro and Harappa have revealed that the Pre-Vedic Civilization was indeed a very high order at least from the materialistic point of view. The Pre-Vedic Aryans inhabited large towns with extensive canalization and constructed in its dwellings, wells, and bath-rooms. The growth of these early cities depended on agriculture and trade. There are unearthed specimens of wheat and barley. The food of the nation comprised beef, mutton, pork, poultry and fish. The bones or shells of all these have been found among the ruins.

The antiquities found other than brick buildings and a limited amount of masonry include limestone figures of men and terracottas representing female figures and animals, the latter including the rhinoceros, now extinct in the Indus Valley. Other remains include beads and other ornaments of chank, carnelian etc., ring stones or maces ; faience bangles ; hamatite pestles polished gold jewellery ; coins ; abundant neolithic implements, such as cairns, burrows, and other rough stone structures, together with flint flakes and cores, mostly found among the Rohri and Kirthar hills. The Indus Civilization was preceded by Neolithic Culture in Sindh. That it was of the Chalcolithic Age is shown by the fact that arms and utensils of stone were used side by side with those of copper or

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

bronze. Domestic vessels were generally of earthenware of various kinds and shapes, offering stands, goblets, heaters, store-jars, etc. The Indus pottery was generally wheel-made painted. Some of it was also 'incised', 'polychrome' and 'glazed'. The seals are of ivory or blue or white faience. They bear a great variety of designs, including bulls, elephants, tigers, and representation of a pippala tree. These antiquities bear a general resemblance to those found on Sumerian sites in Mesopotamia, especially Kish and Sura.

The Pre-Vedic Aryans of the Indus Valley seem to be originally related to the Dravidians who came from the Deccan which was still very well known to them. The fine green amazon stone used for building and other purposes came from Doddabetta in the Nilgiris as its only source in India, and amethyst from the Deccan trap. The religion of the Pre-Vedic Aryans was the worship of the material elements in nature and the veneration of the dead. If we examine the various sorts of worship then prevailing we would see that the mass worshipped but local genii, ghosts, demons, and the spirits of their forefathers. The appearance of dead persons to their near relatives in dreams went a great way in confirming the existence of an invisible world, the world of spirits or the dead. The Pre-Vedic Aryans used to feel that in some unknown way these beings were greater, more powerful than themselves, and limited their freedom. They, therefore, sought to propitiate these beings in order to prevent them from molesting them. The excavations at Mohenjo daro and Harappa have brought to light images of Yakshas both seated and standing. A striking oblong sealing found at Harappa represents the Yakshi Mother, with a plant growing from her womb, and a man knife in hand and a woman with raised hands, who was probably to be sacrificed. A male Yaksha is portrayed on a seal with three faces and eyes, seated on a low throne, with animals on each side. The special characteristic in this figure, is a pair of horns crowning his head. Another Yaksha with a Naga with uplifted hands is also found portrayed on a faience sealing from Mohenjo daro. Tree worship appears on the Indus seals in two forms; one shows the worship of the tree in its natural form, and the other indicates the worship of its indwelling spirit.

The Pre-Vedic Civilization of the Indus Valley does not exhibit any alien or different type of culture or religion, but only earlier exprssion of the thought-life of the Vedic Aryans which

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

in later days got developed, sublimated and crystallized in the form of Vedic Civilization. There is hardly any single item among the finds from Mohenjo daro and Harappa which could not be linked with the early cultured life of the Vedic Aryans as we glean it from the Vedas. The most singular feature of the Indus Civilization, namely, the cotton industry, is also an established industry in Rgvedic Age. The presence of the phallus, the Yupa, etc., among the excavations in the Indus Valley, are also mentioned in Vedic hymns. The Pre-Vedic beliefs in Yakshas and Nagas with their forms diffused so extensively in India that traces are noticeable in the iconographical sculptures of all Indian religions up to this day. When we pass to the age of the Vedas, we find that goblins ghosts, sorcerers, witches, still holding influence over a certain section. There are incantations in the Atharva Veda. In accordance with the tradition preserved in the Tibetan Dulva, the Sakyas were accustomed to present all newborn children before the image of the Yaksha Sakya-vardhana, evidently the tutelary deity of the clan. Many references to Naga cults are scattered through the Buddhist texts. The Chinese pilgrims constantly refer to monasteries and stupas occupying sites originally haunted by the Nagas. Hiuen Tsang informs us that Nalanda was originally the name of a Naga and the monastery built by the side of a pool is, therefore, called after his name. If we are to believe the Nidanakatta, Sujata mistook the Bodhisattva for the sylvan deity for whom her offering of milk-rice had been originally intended. The Bodhi-druma was a sacred tree, haunted by a Yaksha before the Bodhisattva took his seat beneath it on the eve of the Great Enlightenment. Most of the Yaksha cettya so frequently referred to in Buddhist and Jaina literature as having been the haunt (bhavan) of such and such Yakshas, may have been sacred trees. In Bauddha legend, we find various individual Yakshas namely Alawaka, Satagera, Bemawata, Purnaka, Virudaka, Gangita, Suchiloma, Supavasa, Nandaka, etc. In Indian sculptures concerning Buddhism the early ones are associated with the Yaksha figures, who are represented with a flower, or as cauri bearers, or with folded hands as attendants and worshippers. At Barhut they appear as guardians or dwarapalas at the gateways. In Sanchi north torana, we find the Buddha turning the wheel of the Law, having on either side a cauri bearing Yaksha. On the occassion of the Great Enlightenment, Buddha is represented by the Bodhi tree and and on either side a Yaksha holding a lotus. There are sculptures

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

showing earth spirits or Yakshas male or female, holding up the horse's hoofs, when Prince Siddhartha is departing from Kapilavastu on horse-back. The constant attendant of Buddha in the Gandhara reliefs who carries a thunderbolt is nobody but a Yaksha. Among the remains dug out by the Burmese gentlemen at Buddha Gaya there are four small images representing Nagakanya, with fierce looking faces and large tusks, engaged in horrible tasks. The Naga or serpent-worship in India is still prevalent. The connection of the Nagas with the pipal and the margosa trees is evidently a relic of the Pre-Vedic Tree and Serpent Worship. Eight lords of Nagas, mentioned in the Agamas, namely, Sesha (Ananta), Vasuki, Lakshaka, Karkotaka, Abja, Mahambuja, Sankhadhara, and Kulika were invoked to decide about the auspicious or inauspicious nature of the grant. In the Epics, it is remarked that not even the leaf of a caitya may be destroyed for caityas are the resorts of Yakshas, Nagas, Apsaras, Bhutas, etc. The Aksaya vata of the Epic shows the continuation of one ot the Pre-Vedic beliefs. The Pre-Vedic tradition of 'tree Marriage' has survived to the present day. The twining of the limbs of the dryads, in the Buddha Gaya pillar, deliberately or unconsciously expresses the same idea. The Mahabharata and the Jatakas speak of men marrying trees. Hiuen Tsang's story of the origin of the name 'Pataliputra' from the marriage of a student to the Patali tree, resulting in human offspring. The custom of a man's marrying a tree preferably a banana or plantain, prevails among the Hindus even to day. But the object of the ceremony is to create a hiatus in the series of deaths of the wives, married one after another.

The Pre-Vedic notions took various forms in later Indian sculptures as follows :—

(1) Hariti and Panchika, the Yaksha couple.

(2) Mother Goddess, a type of nude Yakshi carrying a child or watching over him, appears with an escort of beasts. She is regarded as the mother of all existing things.

(3) Woman and Tree Motive,—Yakshinis standing under blossoming Asoka trees and performing the ceremony of Asoka Dohada* or Salabhanjika (breaking the branch of a sala tree). The left arm is twined round a stem and the right hand raised to her head. In some cases they are more or less clothed and sometimes unmistakably and aggressively naked. Very often but not always

* Asoka Dohada implies an Asoka tree longing for the touch of a lady's foot before its time of efflorescence.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

they stand on a dwarf, animal or monster. They are posed as gathering flowers with outsretched hand from the over laden twigs hanging low and looking obliquely with their back to the visitor. It should be remembered in this connection that the 'Woman and Tree Motive' represented by the Indian Sculptors, was always with the left foot firmly planted while the right bent or in the act of stepping forward, that is, almost entirely relieved of the burden. This pose is of very ancient standing in Indian sculptures; it is usually, if not exclusively, seen in female figures*.

(4) There are many other miscellaneous sculptures of the later period representing the Yakshinis with miscellaneous motifs. Sometimes carrying a basket of wicker work on her head and some objects in her hands, she stands exquisitely poised in noble and dignified repose. She wears the suggestion of a happy smile on her face. As actresses they are either taking part in a musical performance or performing a gymnastic feat. Sometimes they are engaged in toilet scenes holding mirror in hand. Others are seen enjoying trick with unwary cranes or parrots, or playing with balls or bathing under mountaneous cascade or singing to the accomplishment of Sapta-tanti-vina.

The Pre-Vedic figures and images consisted of fantastic creations which I have classified into four graded groups :—

(1) The combination of various animal elements such as, winged bull with a crocodile's tail; makara showing the body of a fish, etc. The group also includes designs representing two or more animals having but one head, so placed as to be equally appropriate to each of the several bodies.

(2) The combination of animal's head with human body such as Kinnaras (centauress), Nrisingha (leocephalic), goat headed, elephant headed, monkey headed figures.

(3). The combination of human head with animal body. The Naga (snake) having the upper part as human with serpent hoods, while the lower part serpent; the Matsyanaris having human (female) bodies and fish tails belong to this third group.

(4) The representation of human form with multi arms and faces. The Yakshas and Yakshinis were sometimes represented in such fearful forms.

---

* The same device is found in the Hellenistic sculptures as well. But the Aachen figures are often male and standing with the right leg straight and the left leg crossed over it.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Of stone images excavated few as they are, three are worthy of mention. One is that of a dead person and not a yogi with meditative eyes as described by some archaeologists. Another is a portrait head. The third is a seated image showing a shawl worn. There are two statuettes found at Harappa, one of which, of red stone, shows faithful modelling of fleshy parts, and the other of dark grey slate, the figure of a male dancer. The animal figures show a wonderful vigour of expression, virility, vitality and animation in form. But these figures or images are not to be regarded as works of Indian Art, because the desire of imitation is the exciting as well as only cause there. The origin of the cult of Yoga is seen by some eminent Archaeologists in certain stone statuettes unearthed at Mohenjo daro. They appear to them as ascetics with half-shut eyes in contemplation and fixed on the tip of the nose. But I think they are images of dead bodies because the conception of Yoga in the proper sense did not occur to the Indian mind before the advent of the Upanishadic Age. The Pre-Vedic Aryans had not even the conception of the Ekamev-advitiyam.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER SIX

THE VEDIC ARYANS AND INDIAN ART

The western minded scholars generally refuse to believe that the Vedic Aryans were autochthonous and that the Vedic age was a stage in the gradual development of Indian civilization from their primitive condition, unaided by external influences. They hold that the Vedic Aryans were a foreign race who entered India about 2300 or 2200 B. C., and when they entered the Punjab, they made an almost clean sweep of the native races and were able to keep their blood absolutely pure. But unfortunately there is absolutely no evidence, historical or literary or anthropological, to justify their theory of 'Aryan Invasion.'

The philologists assume that a relationship of language implies relationship of blood. Sir William Jones observed that the Sanskirt language, the languages of Persia, Greece, Rome, of the Celts and Germans were all closely connected and therefore must have sprung from some common source. The philological evidences are supported to a certain extent by the coincidences which are observed in the mythologies of the Vedas, the Zend Avesta of Persia, and the mythologies of Greece. Scholars like Kulm and Max Muller have identified the Erinys of the Greeks with the Saranyu of the Vedas, the Centaurs with the Gandharvas, Helios and Sol with Surjya, Eros with Ushas, Uranus with Varuna, etc. The Sanskrit word 'tara' (star) is equivalent to the Greek 'aster' and 'astron' the Latin 'astrum', and the Zend 'stara'; Sanskrit 'matar' = Latin 'mater' = English 'mother'; Sanskrit 'Sunu' = Lithuanian 'Sunu' = old High German 'Sunu' = English 'Son'; etc. The community of mythologies between the Indians and the Iranians is more strongly marked. Both had in their mythologies,—Yama, Trita, Mitra, Vayu, Sarva, Indra, Vilrahan, Nasatyas, Asura, etc. Both made Soma offerings in Yajnas or sacrifices, and had common names for priests as hotri and Atharvan. Now, these common peculiarities raise a strong supposition that the ancestors of a large section of the people of Europe, Persia and India at one time lived in one place, spoke one language, and possessed one culture. But the greatest diversity of opinion among scholars is regarding the original home of this parent stock. Some eminent European scholars of the last century advocated that Central Asia was the cradle of the Aryan race. Their opponents hold that India has ever been the home of the Vedic Aryans, and that if the Persians and the Europeans have

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

been proved to be related to the Vedic Aryans, presumably they must have migrated from India. According to Schlegal and Essais it is nowise probable that the migrations which have peopled so large a part of the globe should have commenced at its southern extremity and have been constantly directed from that point towards the the north-west. But their opponents have proved that ancient trade routes lay westward from India, through the Persian Gulf and the Black Sea to the Baltic. The middle region was the arena of the welter of races and of racial miscegenations, as is indicated by Nasili in Cappadocia. The Tripolic culture of South Russia marks the march of Indo-European tribes westwards. The Phoenicians started from the Persian Gulf and spread along the Arab coast to the Red Sea and finally established themselves on the coast of Palestine. People of Maglemosian Culture worked their way westward, taking the hunting dog with them. Mediterranean and Azilian Culture spread northwards, the use of the bow and arrow.

Geologists like Blanford and Vredenburg have proved that rainfall in Central Asia has fallen off greatly in comparatively modern times making vast areas uncultivable and practically uninhabitable. Kirman is now an almost desert country with very scanty rainfall. But Strabo in the first century B. C., describes it as fertile and well-wooden country with plenty of waters and producing everything. Then, why should it be assumed that a large number of the Aryans had emigrated in about 2300 B. C., to the less hospitable lands in Persia and Europe and to the unknown land of the Punjab, while their so-called Central Asian abode was still fairly well-watered and fertile? It was of course in much later period that the Tartar hordes overflowed into Persia, India, the Euphrates valley, and Europe when the climate of Central Asia had undergone a material change for the worse.

The Vedic Aryans were autochthonous to India and their evolution as a race began from very primitive times. They had passed through all the stages of development,—eolithic, palaeolithic, neolithic, and chalcolithic before they emerged into the earliest stage of spiritual culture and civilization. The Vedic sacrifices contain evidences of growth from neolithic times in India. The site of the Yajna is consecrated by dragging a frog on stone till it is killed. The animal to be sacrificed is tied to a wooden post (yupa). That earthenware pots and wooden utensils alone are sacred enough to be used in the hall of sacrifice is another proof that the fire sacrifices had their roots in neolithic practices. The holy thread of

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

the Brahmans is even to-day spun with spindles made of the spine of the coconut leaf and weighted with a stone disc; the use of an iron tool will make the thread lose its holiness. The principal idol in temples is the one made of stone or wood. The stone made and bone made vajras which are mentioned in the Rgveda as the original weapons of Indra, necessarily reveal the transitional period from the palaeolithic to the neolithic stage.

The supposition that the Vedic Aryans had made a clean sweep of the native races is equally absurd. Dravidian elements are to be found alike in Vedic and classified Sanskrit, in the Prakrits, and even in the modern vernaculars of Northern India. The changes which they underwent, still retained some words of their Dravidian predecessors. For examples Matachi (locust), Markata (monkey), Khatta (cot), Kukkura (dog), Keyura (bracelet), are Dravidian words. Khoka (son), Talu (scalp), Nola (tongue), Meye (daughter), Minmin (glimmering), Pilley (child), Mina (fish), Neera (water), Jhagra (fighting) and plural suffixes 'Guli' and 'Gula' have come from Dravidian sources.

The hymns of the Rgveda give no indication that the Vedic Aryans thought of themselves as being strangers in India or as being in any way related with another people away to the west. On the contrary they regarded themselves as belonging to the soil on which they live. The Dravidians who could not keep pace with the advanced section, who called themselves 'Aryans,' remained in the nomadic and pastrol stages of civilization, and were called Dasas. From a careful perusal of the Rgvedic hymns it would appear that the Rgvedic Aryans were divided into many tribes. Five of them were named, Anus, Druhyus, Yadus, Turvasas, and Purus. They developed a homogeneous civilization, worshipping the same gods, and performing the same religious rites and ceremonies, though occasionally quarrelling and warring among themselves. There were other tribes known as the Krivis or Pancala, the Cedis, the Matsyas, the Ajas, Yaksus, and Sigrus, and the Vreivants etc. Besides those mentioned above, there were others who though Aryan, were conservative. They retained their old Pre-Vedic culture and civilization. They were Sisnas who worshipped the lingam; the Vrtras who worshipped the Nagas; the Krisnas, the Arjikas, and the Krtvans We do not find any regulation in the Rgveda forbidding intermarriage between these tribes and the Vedic Aryans.

The civilization of the Pre-Vedic period, does not exhibit any alien or different type of culture or religion, but earlier expressions of the

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

thought-life of the Vedic Aryans which in later days got developed sublimated and crystallized in the form of Vedic civilization. The gods of the Vedic Aryans when the civilization was still confined in the Punjab, were personified nature forces and the various other aspects of creation. There is no doubt that the popular Pre-Vedic belief in the existence of evil spirits known as Raksas, Yaksas. etc., continued in Rgvedic times. Against the attacks of spirits unseen and malignant, certain mantras or incantations were uttered. some of which are found in the Rgveda as well. The Vedic Aryans like their Pre-Vedic predecessors were an eminently sacrifice-loving people, performing sacrifices daily, fortnightly, monthly. seasonally, annually, and so on all important occasions and at the happenings of all the principal vents of life viz., birth. teething, tonsure, marriage, conception, initiation. illness. death and so forth. Yajna still meant by them sacrifice—the sacrifice of something that one considers to be useful or valuable in favour of an invisible being or Spirit, who is supposed to be fond of it. and capable of awarding a desired boon to the performer. The indiscriminate slaughter of animals and the free indulgence in the intoxicating juice of the soma plant associated with the Vedic ritual involved the tacit cohesion or preservation by the Aryan priesthood of many bloody and obscene orgies of their uncivilised predecessors. The sacrifices were held in the open air or in a shed erected for the purpose near the house of the sacrificer. Temple building seems to have been unknown in the Rgvedic age.

With reference to the Vedic belief in God, scholars differ. Some hold it to be polytheism, others, to be monotheism or henotheism. The tendency to worship is ingrained in the nature of man. A part of his nature is satisfied only when it can exercise itself in adoration and admiration of something which appeals to it powerfully and which, he believes, is higher than himself. Worship as found expression with the early Vedic Aryans, was the adoration of the striking forces of nature, such as manifested in the sun, the fire, the clouds, the storm, the rain, etc. These were personified into gods and goddesses. Each divinity was held to have influence on things far beyond that phase of the physical world which is his source. He was believed to be able to give his worshippers material blessings, prosperitty, wealth, cattle, rich crops, chariots, children, health, long life, protection from danger, victory in war. Thus the overwhelming impression made by the Rgvedic prayers is that the religion of the early Vedic Aryans was polytheism and that the

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

spirit of religion was worldly and mercenery like their Pre-Vedic predecessors.

But the philosophical hymns of ihe Vedas show that the Aryans were weary of seeking mere economic welfare through religious ritual of a magical character. They wished to know something greater than their ordinary religion and sought to delve into the secret mystery of the Universe, the highest and the greatest truth. They formed the conception of a Being who is the depository and the source of all powers and forces of nature, from whom nature with its manifold living creatures has emanated and by whom it is sustained and maintained. In spite of all the diversity in the world there is one fundamental reality in which all duality ceases. The highest truth is thus the highest being, who is both immanent in the world and transcendent. He holds the world within him and yet does not exhaust himself in the world. The ordinary polytheism and henotheism of Vedic worship thus slowly pass away, sometimes into monotheism and sometimes into pantheism. While dealing with the Vedic gods, Yaska in his Nirukta, says that there is only one God. On the earth He appears as the Agni (Fire); in the mid-region He appears as Indra; and in the celestial region He appears as Savitri (the Sun). The various gods in each of these three planes are only aspects of these three manifestations of the One God. Thus the reduction of infinite aspects of the spiritual force into thirty three and subsequently into three, Agni, Indra, and Surya, finally developed into one Primordial Force of Nature named Aditi or Ekamev-advitiyam. It will thus appear that the Vedic Aryans gradually conceived unity in the midst of diversity. They realised that "Ekam vai-idam vi babhuva sarvam", i.e., One is that which hath become this all. The early Vedic Aryans like their predecessors were mere worshippers of crude physical nature in all its different aspects. But their successors began to look upon the physical forces as the different manifestations under different names of the One, all-pervading and underlying Spirit that was intelligent, active and highly beneficent and revealed itself outwardly as the Sun, the Prthvi, the Maruts, Agni, Indra, Varuna, Ushas, and so forth. It was their spiritual revelation, not creation and therefore the Vedas are without any personal author.

The Vedic Aryans were proficient in carpentry, building houses and racing chariots of wood, and metal work, making vessels of 'Ayas,' presumably copper, for domestic and ritual use, and using gold jewellery. They wove, knew sewing and tanning, and made pottery. The rich and the nobles lived in forts made of stones or

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

hard materials. There is also mention of iron forts or cities. There are evidences that men and women of the Rgvedic times amused themselves by singing songs, dancing, playing on musical instruments and attending fairs. The male dancer was called 'Nrtu'. The hymns themselves prove that singing was highly esteemed. Musical instruments namely Dundubhi (drum), Karkari (lute), Ksoni (vina) are mentioned together with the gatha pati (the lord of song), gathin (singer) etc. Seven women used to sing songs in praise of the Soma, when squeezeing out the juice from the plant with their fingers

It is mentioned in the Rgvedic verse that Yakshi images were carved upon wood. It is quite possible that images of unrobed Yakshis were carved upon the wooden posts that supported the thatch of the verandah for the purpose of decoration. Some modern scholars assert that the anthropomorphical descriptions of the gods in the Rgveda were not merely imaginery, but also suggested their sensible representations. But in my opinion the anthropomorphical descriptions afford no certain evidence for the making of images during the Vedic period. The making of images of gods became in fashion in post-Vedic times and are referred to by Patanjali in the Mahabhashya, by Bana in the Harshacharita and in the Jaina Works of a later date. Max Muller rightly holds that the religion of the Vedas knows of no idols. Moreover, mere apprehension of the Infinite, the Formless cannot help us to render Him in terms of a finite form or body. In other words only knowledge (anubhav) cannot enable us to represent the great unconditioned Being, the Broahmo or Isa, the all-pervading Principle, in an image, conditioned by form or space. The Vedic Aryans, therefore, built no temples and knew no image worship.

The Vedas place before us the one ideal that the goal of mankind is Veda (Vidya) or Knowledge. It is not happiness but knowledge towards which man is going and the external world is simply the suggestion, the occasion which sets man to knowledge. The knowledge which clings to each object as if it were the whole reality is 'Ajnana'. The knowledge, which regards all beings as separate from each other is 'Vijnana'. The highest knowledge that enables us to see the unity of all life, is 'Jnana'. It is the recognition of Ekamev-advitiyam the One without a second, and when it is comprehended all difficulties vanish; all the perplexities of the heart smooth away; the delusion of manifoldness vanishes; and Nature or Maya, instead of being a horrible, hopeless dream, becomes beautiful. That is why there is absolutely no touch of pessimism in the Vedic

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

outlook on life ; no idea that the world is a place of misery ; no yearning to get rid of the shackles of this world. The Vedic way to knowledge was not through intellectual activity, but through intuition or the method of direct perception of the supper-sensible i.e., Broahmo Anubhuti. It is the first step towards Indian Art. Indian Art the representation of the highest truth, cannot begin until all the three stages namely: (1) Broahmo-Anubhuti (intuitive apprehension of Broahmo the highest truth), (2) Broahmo-Sannidhana (approach to the highest truth), and (3) Broahmo-Samsparsha (contact with the highest truth), are complete.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE UPANISHADIC AGE AND INDIAN ART

So as to find out an explanation for the cultural difference between the Vedic Aryans and those of the Upanishadic age, some western minded scholars brought forward their theory of the 'Second Invasion.' Dr. Hoernle suggests that a second band of invaders from Central Asia, finding the usual route by Kabul Valley barred, pushed their way through Gilghit and Chitral keeping close to the northern mountains, and entered like a wedge into the Midland Country known as Madhyadesha. Mr. C. V. Vaidya in his 'Epic India' thinks that the Kurukshetra war marks the final victory of the second band over the first one who had settled in the Punjab. Nothing can be further from truth and no graver or more grotesque distortion or disfigurement of history can be conceived.

In the Mahabharata, the Vedic Aryans of the Punjab have been mentioned as the descendants of Pishachas or demons. Just as the Vedic Aryans described the Dravidians as 'Dasas' so in the same way the Punjab was regarded by the Epic Aryans as unholy land and the Vedic Aryans as barbarians. It is quite natural that the more the people become civilised the more they despise their more primitive brethren. Prof. Rapson rightly observes that there is no such break of continuity between the Rgvedic Aryans and the Aryans of the Madhyadesha. The differences in physical type between them are not so unusual as to be incapable of being explained by the ordinary effect of climate. The differences in language can be easily explained if we remember that the Brahmanic literature and institutions as distinguished from the Rgvedic grew up in the Kuru Panchala country, while the people of the Punjab remained backward. During the period from 800 B.C. to 500 B.C., the whole of Northern India had been practically Aryanised or civilised. The centre of life shifted eastward, and comprised the whole country between the Saraswati and the confluence of the Ganges and Jumna, which was known as Madhyadesha or Middle Country; while the Punjab and the western countries correspondingly receded in importance, and their customs received but scant respect in the Brahmana literature. The scriptures of this period are the Brahmanas (ritual) and the Upanishads (philosophy). The Upanishads are also known as Vedanta, literally 'the end of the Vedas,' either on account of

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

their position at the end of certain books of the Vedas or on account of their representing the essence or conclusion of the Vedas. The Upanishads are generally accounted to be one hundred and eight in number, The earliest of them are certainly pre-Buddhistic, only a few took place after Buddha, It is likely that they were composed between the completion of the Vedic hymns and the rise of Buddhism,

The simple religion of the Vedic section namely the Samhitas and the Brahmanas was one of sacrifices, Man's relations with God were mechanical, a question of give and take, profit and loss. In the Upanishadic section they declare that the soul will not obtain salvation by the performance of sacrifices; it can be obtained only by the truly religious life, based on an insight into the heart of the universe. Perfection, according to the Upanishads, is inward and spiritual, not outward and mechanical. We cannot make a man clean by washing his shirt. The uselessness of ritual, the futility of sacrifices as means to salvation are brought out. God, is to be honoured by spiritual worship and not by external ceremony. We cannot save ourselves by mere praising God. We cannot impress Him by sacrifices. Sacrifice is not made to mean feasting but renunciation. Make every action, every feeling and every thought an offering to God. Thus when the Upanishadic section prevailed over the early Vedic teaching, external means for achieving the highest object of life naturally gave place to internal ones and thus meditation took the place of performance of rites and ceremonies, i.e., 'tapasya' replaced 'yajna.' No doubt there can be found in the Upanishads some traces whatsoever of the Atharvic influence so far as incantations and charms are concerned. In one passage, the Mundaka tells us that the only way towards securing the goal of human life consists in blindly following the routine of sacrificial and ritualistic works enjoined upon us by our ancestors. But on the whole the Upanishads contain a scientific search for the Substratum underlying the phenomenal forces of nature. In a word, we may say, that as we pass from the Vedas to the Upanishads, we pass from prayer to philosophy, from hymnology to reflection, from henotheistic polytheism to monotheistic mysticism.

The early Vedic polytheistic conceptions were too deeply rooted in the Indian consciousness to be easily overthrown. The idea of one Supreme Power as the controller of universe evolved in later Vedic age. And when monotheistic idea first appeared, the Upanishadic period began. This monotheistic view is explicitely

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

developed in the Keno Upanishad in which we are told how all the presiding gods of the powers of nature, such as Agni and Vayu, tried their best to compete with Broahmo, but Agni could not burn a blade of grass, nor Vayu could blow a whisp of straw against the wishes of Broahmo. Then the many gods were subordinated to the One from Whom they all derived their powers :—

"तमेव भान्तमनुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति"।

"He shining, everything doth shine. Through Him everything shineth." We have a vivid description in the Mundaka Upanishad, of how the world has emanated from Broahmo, like sparks from fire or like the spider's web from the spider. Thus instead of denouncing the early Vedic ideas of personified natural forces as unfit for later times, the seers of the Upanishads began to seek out the highest truth in them and the result was the Impersonal Absolute, finding Oneness throughout the Universe.

In spite of the profoundity and brilliance of the Upanishadic ideas they cannot be regarded as sufficient ground for the beginning of Indian Art. But this does not mean that Industrial crafts were not practised during the Upanishadic period. The knowledge of metals had developed. Tin, lead, and silver are mentioned in the Upanishads besides Ayas (iron or copper). Cotton, linen, silk, and wollen garments were worn. Storied buildings are mentioned. Round and square huts, bricks, plates, cups, and spoons of gold and silver, iron knives, needles, mirrors, elevated bed steads, thrones and seats, musical instruments, millstones, turbans, crown, jewellery, earthenware and a ship are mentioned in connection with the rituals. But Indian Art could not commence in the Upanishadic period. For, the Upanishads again and again reiterate the fact that the Impersonal Absolute Atman is incognizable by any of the sense organs :—

"यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते अप्राप्य मनसा सह"।

"From whence the word comes back reflected together with the Mind." Again :—

"न तत्र चक्षुर्गच्छति न वाग्गच्छति"।

"There the eye cannot go, nor can speech reach." It is beyond the reasoning faculties of man and is, therefore, unattainable by logic, and consequently it is indescribable in speech and unthinkable by

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

thought. The pursuit of the Upanishadic teachings led the Indian Artist near the Ekamev-advitiyam, Broahmo and this was the second step towards the beginning of Indian Art. In the Vedic Age we had intuitive apprehension of the highest truth (Broahmo-Anubhuti). In the Upanishadic age we come near the Supreme, that is the stage known as 'Broahmo -Sannidhana.' Now, there remains one step more and that is 'Broahmo-Samsparsha' or contact with the highest truth, whereupon begins Indian Art.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER EIGHT

BUDDHISM AND INDIAN ART

To the sages of the Upanishads the external Vedic sacrifices had no value whatsoever. They developed the new idea of self-sacrifice known as Swartha Yajna (self-mortification) in contrast with the older Vedic dravya-yajna (sacrifice with the material things). The early Vedic Aryans were, naturally, attached to wordly enjoyments. They wanted to satisfy thereby the sense organs. But gradually when they fully realized that bodily satisfaction could in no way bring about real happiness, external means gave place to internal ones and thus meditation took the place of performance of rites and ceremonies. This gave rise to Yoga—controlling of senses, resorting to austerity or self mortification in its different forms. Later on they were carried to the severest possible extent. The Upanishadic ideas could make their appeal only to the intelligentsia, but fell flat on the average man to whom the attainment through 'Jnana Yoga' appeared as an Utopian ideal. Their conclusions were not based on an intelligible chain of reasoning and arguments but held out merely as the intuitive experiences of great minds. Although by implication they denied the efficacy of ritualistic Yajna for the purpose of salvation, they prescribed no substitute for it, which an average man could normally pursue for achieving the highest object of life. The age that followed the Upanishads, therefore, saw new developments in religious thoughts with a view to remove these deficiencies. Men, who profoundly influenced the subsequent changes sprung among the Kshattriyas. They were Buddha, Mahavira, Gosala, Mankhaliputra, Sanjaya Bellattliputra, Kakuda Katyayana, Purna Kasyapa, and Ajitakasakambala etc. We are concerned, here, only with Buddha and his system of philosophy.

Gautama the Buddha was brought up in the free atmosphere of independent republican clan namely the Sakyas. He was independent in thought and followed reason and truth. As regards the Vedic sacrifices attended with animal killing, he held that it was impossible to reach the final goal through them. He denounced the cruelty of animal sacrifices, and proclaimed a religion of universal love and brotherhood. His prohibition relieved the Indian masses of a burden which had become a grievous impediment to their spiritual progress. The teachings of the Upanishads and Buddha, both held that the main cause of misfortunes is rooted in

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Avidya (ignorance) and desire. Ignorance means non-perception or wrong perception of truth and the cessation of desire is possible only after the removal of ignorance. According to the Upanishads the true knowledge of the highest truth can be obtained by the Jnana Yoga or marga (path of wisdom). By the Jnana Yoga, the individual soul merges in the Universal Soul as a river merges in the ocean, and thus becomes completely free not only from desire but also from anxiety, trouble, and sorrow. But according to the teachings of Buddha, the existence of everything depends on a cause and if the cause can be detected and removed, evil itself will be removed. Avidya (ignorance) is conditioned and determined by the acts (Karma) done in previous existences. The reason why we cannot change our present state of things as we may will, is that it has already been determined by the Karma that was performed in our previous lives.* Moreover, if what we are now has been the result of our own past actions, it certainly follows that whatever we wish to be in future can be produced by our present actions or Karma. So we must know how to act (Karma Yoga). It is fruitless to try to purify the body by mortification of the flesh and self-torture, for it is the moral evil that enslaves man in the cage of his body. The performance of good deeds does indeed procure man some material advantage as he moves in the cycle of birth and rebirth, but it is only by the complete eradication of all evil that we can hope to go to the other side, to Nirvana, the final emancipation from birth and death. Buddha laid stress more on actions and conduct (Karma Yoga) than meditation and intuitive wisdom (Jnana Yoga). His simple rule of life was founded on the precepts of right views, right resolves, right speech, right actions, right living, right effort, right self-knowledge, and right meditation.

Buddhism was only a philosophy and not a religion. It may be justly said that Buddha's philosophic and practical teaching added a new chapter rather, in continuation than to be treated as an entire repudiation of the Vedic tradition. In the Vedas we get Broahmo-Anubhuti i. e., intuitive apprehension of the Impersonal and Absolute Truth or Broahmo. In the Upanishads we come near the Supreme (Broahmo-Sannidhana) and obtain an insight into truth. The noble prayer of the Upanishadic age,

"असतो मा सद्गमय; तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय; मृत्योर्माऽमृतं गमय,"

from unreality lead me to the real, from darkness to the

* According to Buddhism even the gods owe their positions to their virtuous actions in previous existences.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

light, from death to immortality," indicates the stage of striving for contact with the Supreme. Buddha reached this final stage and attained Broahmo-Nirvana or Broahmo-Samsparsha (contact with the Supreme). Therefore he maintained silence about the nature of ultimate reality or Broahmo. Nagarjuna says that Buddha did not give any definition of the ultimate reality. In Buddhism, there is no mention of the supreme God, simply because there was nothing left to mark the distinction between the adored and the adorer, the seer and the seen, Art and the 'ist.'

Buddha's contact with the highest truth marks the beginning of Indian Art. He whose spirit has been made one with God stands before man as the supreme flower of humanity. There man finds in truth what he is. In India he who has truly reached this stage, receives homage from all. The highest wisdom in the East holds that it is not the function of our soul, to gain God, to utilise Him for any special material purpose. All that we can ever aspire to is to become more and more one with God. For the expression of this fundamental truth, sculptures and paintings had henceforth come to be used as vehicles. As the demand for religious information increased the Buddhist missionaries employed sculptures and paintings as means of imparting the tenets of the creed to all mankind. Wherever they went they took with them 'Chittas' or paintings to assist in expounding the sacred doctrines. The simplest and most expressive language which the chisel of the Indian sculptures could command, voiced truthfully the soul of the people, and still continues to make an instant and deep appeal to Indian feelings.

But Buddha attained the subjective contact with the highest truth, and, therefore, the worship of image was forbidden by Buddha himself. The Vajra-Chhedica-sutra contains the emphatic injunction,—"He who looks for Me through any material form or seeks me through any audible sound, has entered on an erroneous course and shall never behold the Tathagata." In the story of Attadatta the Thera, Buddha says, "For truly they honour me not who honour me with perfumes and garlands. They only honour me who fulfil the higher and the lower law. In Milindapanha the reverend Nagasena still teaches King Menander that henceforth the Blessed One is no longer visible except in the form of the Dharmakaya or the body of the doctrine. Buddha forbade decoration of monasteries with human figures. It is related that during the lifetime of Buddha, Ajatasatru desired a portrait of the

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Master. Buddha only allowed his shadow to fall on a piece of cloth and this shape ' silhouette ' was filled in with colour. Regarding the Buddha figure of Udayana, a Tibetan historian relates how Buddha was mirrored in the water and the artists who were blinded by glory, could only reproduce this reflection, and so the waving lines of the robe are accounted for. At the command of Udayana Vatsaraja of Kausambhi the famous sandalwood figure is said to have been prepared by an Indian Artist who had transported himself by Yoga to the Tushita heavens and brought back a faithful portrait of the Blessed One. Such statements, however, prove that the image was not made during the lifetime of Buddha.

In accordance with the foreign writers' opinion the concrete realistic image of Buddha, was not an easy task and, therefore, the Ancient Indian Artists had not been able to figure the Blessed One. They insist on the incapacity of the Indian Artist to portray, during his lifetime, the ineffable lineaments of the Blessed One. They refuse to believe this strange practice of omitting the Buddha figure from the Barhut and Sanchi reliefs as due to religious injunctions. But I think that the actual remains and the period to which they belong are our most trustworthy guides and sufficient evidences to interpret the real cause with reasonable confidence. The orthodox injunctions of the early Buddhism were quite in consonance with the esoteric teaching of the Upanishads. The Vedantic tradition was followed by the Buddhist builders who erected no temple. The room reserved for sermons and prayers was known as Samgha Griha. The South was still believed to be the abode of the spirits of the dead, and therefore, the Buddhist Stupa had its exit on the south, so that its ghostly inhabitant might pass on its way to its final abode. Thus we can find that Buddha's teaching did not exhibit any hostility to the popular pre-Vedic cults. The Duvla gives us a sort of key to the frequent representation of Yakshas as dvarapalas. Anatha-pindada asked Buddha how the vihara must be ornamented. Buddha answered, "On the outside door you must have figured Yaksha holding a club in his hand.....etc."

In accordance with the Vedic tradition the great unconditional Being, the Broahmo cannot be conceived as an image, conditioned by form or space; in other words there can be no representation, picture, or idol of the Supreme. To these uncompromising conceptions, the Upanishadic seers introduced certain concessions. If the highest truth could not be pictured or visualized in a finite form, certain aspects of It could be symbolised and made accessible

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

or comprehensible, for the sake of the worshipper, the Sadhaka or Upasaka. It is clearly understood that this symbol (Pratika) is not the Divinity Itself, but a suggestion, to the finite human mind, of a fragment of the Infinite Being. It is a mere aid, an instrument for the attainment of Yoga or contact with the Divinity. The Upanishads had a profound influence upon Buddha's teachings. Buddha is said to have taught on his death bed to his well loved disciple, "There are four places, O, Ananda which an honourable worshipper should visit with religious emotion". The Mahaparinibbana-sutta also recommends the pilgrimage to those four sacred places namely: (1) Kapilavastu, the nativity of Buddha, (2) Buddha Gaya, where the Blessed One attained omniscience, (3) Sarnath, where he put the Wheel of the Law in motion, and (4) Kusinagara, where he attained Nirvana. The Jati, the Abhisambodhi, the Dharmacakra pravartana, and the Parinirvana were thus associated with the four places, in the Divyavadana. Now, the influence of the Upanishadic teachings and obedience to the commands of Buddha gave the first impetus to the rise of the Symbolic Indian Art. The four places were represented symbolically as follows:—(1) Kapilavastu where birth and the Mahabhinishkramana took place is represented by the symbol of a horse without a rider; (2) Buddha Gaya the place of Abhisambodhi is symbolised by an empty throne or the sacred Bodhi tree or footprints; (3) Sarnath is represented by the Dharmachakra or the Wheel of the Law; (4) Kusinagara where the Parinirvana took place is symolised by a simple stupa. To the early Buddhists, those symolic representations served the purpose of the image of Buddha, the manifestation of Infinite Light. We may rely upon the above mentioned facts as conclusive evidence against image-worship for the first few centuries after the Broahmo Nirvana of the Great Teacher. Buddha forbade ritualistic ceremony in general and image-worship in particular and his teaching was respected for pretty long time. The early Indian Sculptors carried the strange undertaking of representing symbolically either Bodhisattva or Buddha in the course of his last earthly existence. Their sculptures show the profound influence of the teachings of Upanishads through Buddhism upon Indian Art. They prove the interesting fact that for a long time the worship of the person of Buddha was not part of Buddhist ritual, In them everything was Buddhist but it was Buddhism without Buddha. He (Buddha) nowhere appeared either as a heavenly person to be worshipped or

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

even as as ascetic. The objects that attracted the reverent homage of both human beings and animals, were the symbols of the faith, the sacred footprints, the Bodhi tree, the wheel, and the empty throne, in which the Presence dwelt, but not the Presence itself.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER NINE

STUPA

With the Pre-Vedic Aryans we find the idea of soul as the double-body, that is, inside this body there is another body. When the outer body dies, the double gets out and lives on. The life of the double body is limited by the preservation of the outer body. They, therefore, preserved the dead body (outer body) by burying it underground. The next peculiarity with them was an element of fear connected with this double body. The double is always unhappy and miserable, its state of existence is one of extreme pain. It again and again comes back to those who are living, asking for food and drink and enjoyments. It becomes fierce, sometimes threatening the living with death and disaster if it is not supplied with such food.

Coming to Vedic Age we still find the double idea there. But the double body, here has become a sort of spiritual body (i. e., the soul) which is not limited by the outer body. On the contrary, the soul, with the Vedic Aryans, is a separate entity from the body and will not be hurt if the outer body is even destroyed. But the appearance of dead persons in dreams confirmed the old belief which naturally conjured up the existence of an invisible world—the world of spirits or the dead. Fire was regarded by the Rgvedic Aryans as the messenger of the gods on earth, and carrier of the oblations that were offered to them through it. The material things that constituted 'habya' could not be bodily and directly conveyed to the gods in heaven. Hence the services of Agni the heavenly messenger were requisitioned. This analogy was extended to human corpses, as well as to the carcasses of the animals that were sacrificed to the Gods. After a man died, it was thought necessary to send his body to heaven, and this could only be done by consigning it to Agni. Agni is asksd to take the departed body gently up and to carry it to the heaven where the fathers live, where there is no sorrow, where there is joy for ever, and so on. This seems to be the fundamental idea of cremation. Moreover, the Rgvedic Aryans believed that unsatisfied "Double Bodies" after death, became ghosts, goblins and frightful demons called Raksas etc., and that these evil spirits mostly originated from the dead bodies buried in the earth. They, therefore, thought of restricting their number in the terrestrial region by introducing the custom of cremation and thus conveying the outer bodies to heaven.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

The cremation ceremony is, therefore, known as "Aurdvadehik Kriya," i, e,, the ceremony that helps the outer body (Deha) for its upward (Urdha) journey to heaven. Unless this ceremony is performed, the double body or soul is believed to linger among its late environments and hover about, in great distress without consolation as a 'preta.' Cremation is even now regarded as absolutely necessary for the welfare of the souls of the dead, excepting those of infants who are sinless and pure, as well as of holy mendicants or sadhus who are supposed to have overcome their desires and evil propensities during their life-time and therefore require no help of Agni (Fire) to transfer their outer bodies to heaven.

In this way the custom of cremation followed the custom of burial. They are of a similar nature—the one pessimistic and the other optimistic. The one was the evolution from the other. The custom of cremation came into vogue after the cult of Fire-worship had been fully established. But the old custom of burial still continued to be retained by one branch of the Aryans who believed Fire to be too sacred to be polluted by such an unclean thing as a corpse. Hence in Rgvedic times, both the customs existed side by side, as would appear from a careful study of the mantras relating to funeral rites. But later on a compromise between the two customs arose so that after cremation, the bones or ashes of the dead body were collected from the funeral pile and put into an urn and buried in a grave where funeral mound known as caitya was built up in honour of the dead. The word "Chaitya" is said to be derived from a root 'ci'—to build or pile up. It applies to many other kinds of sacred objects coming under the head of sanctuary or holy stead. The main idea of the chaitya as described in the Satapatha-Brahmana, consists in the idea of making a house or monument to a deceased person. In Buddhist literature, a mound shape chaitya enshrining the bodily remains or relics of a notable personage, is denoted by the Pali word "Thupa" or "Dharmarajika". The Vedic meaning of the word 'stupa' was to denote the Ushnisha i. e., the upper part of the head. The commentatorial tradition stating that when Buddha's body was cremated, all but the Ushnisha, the four teeth (molars) and the two collar bones were reduced to bits and ashes, suggests that the skull remained intact. The stupa was originally a chaitya for the enshrinement of the sisa-kapala or "crown of the head", the skull, whence the name stupa arose as an architectural structure for the enshrinement of al bodily remains of a person. Thus the word

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

stupa, originally denoting the crown of the head, was employed as a term of architecture ; the container came to be known by the name of the contained.

M. Foucher suggests that the stupa evolved from an ancient form of the tumulus and that the relation between the two is so close that the tumulus may be regarded just as an archaic stupa. But his theory is partially invalidated by the fact that the tumulus is exclusively a sepulchral mound i.e., a mound covering up a tomb or grave in which the dead body of a person was buried; while the stupa is a mound where the collection of the fragments of bones of the deceased, from the funeral pyre, is deposited within an urn.

The history of stupa did not begin with the death of Gautama the Buddha, or of Mahavira. It appears that the stupas had been erected over supreme monarchs prior to the advent of Buddha; for Buddha particularly informs his disciple Ananda that, "over the remains of a chakravarti Raja, they build the thupa at a spot where four principal roads meet." It is clear, therefore, that the stupa was the common form of chaitya at that period. The Mahaparinibbana-suttanta which is the main canonical authority on the erection of stupas among the Buddhists conclusively shows that usually the body was cremated in one place while the stupas enshrining the relics were built elsewhere. Buddha's direction was to erect a stupa at a public place for the depositing of his bodily remains, after the manner of a mound erected for depositing the bodily remains of a king of kings, and to put up the whole thing as a chaitya or shrine where the people interested might pay their homage. The Buddhist stupas did not follow the Vedic tradition. The Vedic sepulchres were to be made on a secluded spot while Buddha desired it to be at a public place. The Brahmans made their stupas four cornered, while the Buddhists made them round (parimandala). The stupa was primarily intended to just one for the depositing of all the remains of one person, but accidentally the remains of Buddha had to be apportioned, with the result that only a portion thereof suffered to justify the erection of a stupa.

Primarily stupas were, no doubt, funeral mounds and erected by the Buddhists to cover the remains of the dead only. But later on they were erected to commemorate the spots rendered famous by the leading events of Buddha's life. The Buddhist stupas are, therefore, of two distinct kinds, firstly, those strictly funeral, containing the fragments of the dead; secondly, those memorial, built upon celebrated spots where a notable incident in the life of Buddha took place.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Both the Pali term "Thupo" as well as the Sanskrit "Stupa" are of constant use in the Buddhist Books. "Tope" is a corrupt Anglo-Indian form of the word "Thupa." In Burma a stupa is commonly known as a "Pagoda" and in Ceylon as a "Dagaba." Originally the grave was called "Dehagopa" i. e., repository of the body, whence the modern "Dagaba" took form, In Nepal it is called a Chaitya. In the country round Sanchi, a stupa is known as bhita (a mound) and the name of the Great Stupa is called "Sas bahu ka bhita"—the mound of the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law.

From the outward appearance of a Buddhist stupa it is not possible to determine whether it contains a relic or not. In Indian Art the stupa is a symbol of the passing of Buddha into Parinirvana, the boundless Ocean of Eternity. The hemispherical mound devoid of all ornaments was the perfect representation of the Chaitya which the Indian Artist could devise. It appears like a water bubble, which admirably typifies the evanescent character of all wordly objects and, therefore, is the most appropriate emblem of departed life.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER TEN

THE LAW OF KARMA ; THE JATAKAS ; AND DONATION

It was in India and among the Vedic Aryans that the doctrine of the pre-existence, the immortality, and the individuality of the soul first arose. Recent researches in Egypt have failed to show any trace of the doctrines of an independent and individual soul existing before and after the earthly phase of existence. Some of the Mysteries were no doubt in possession of this idea, but in those it has been traced to India. Now, regarding the future condition of the soul, there are three alternatives possible. Firstly, the soul dies with the body or in other words the soul is nothing more than a function of physical life. The Vedic Aryans did not accept this mechanical view. The second view possible that the soul goes either to heaven (eternal bliss) or to hell (eternal torment) and remains there for ever. To the Vedic Aryans, this second view that the soul has only one life, a few brief years, in the course of which it determines for itself an eternal heaven or an eternal hell, seemed unreasonable and unethical. The Vedic Aryans accepted the third view that the soul may not fit for eternal life and yet may not deserve eternal torment and so goes from life to life. One life is not the end of everything. We shall be provided with other chances. The soul does not begin with the body nor does it end with it. The World-Soul i. e., the Broahmo is recognised as the fundamental substance from which all individual souls emanate in order ultimately to return to it, after freeing themselves from any corporeal vestment. The individual soul pursues its long pilgrimage through dying bodies and decaying worlds. The great purpose of redemption is carried over without break from one life to another. Man is only a link in the chain of incarnations, which are phases of metempsychosis. Since the soul is eternal and its desires infinite in number, it stands to reason that until all the desires are exhausted or given up, we must have to work them out, and that different types of desires would require different kinds of bodies for their satisfaction. So arises the theory of reincarnation.

The Buddhist Law of Karma is a corollary to the Upanishadic theory of reincarnation. The Law of Karma, "As you sow so you must reap," gives man something definite to stand upon, instead of ever being at the mercy of extraneous forces. In the course of undergoing rebirth a being is liable to be born not only as a human and superhuman being, but also as a lower animal. For his present

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

condition he has only himself to thank or to blame. There is no chance for his pleading alibi. The Law of Karma is inexorable. The Upanishads pin their faith on the ultimate hope of deliverance (mukti) through Jnana Yoga or the true knowledge of the Universal Spirit. But the Buddhists strive for the salvation through Karma Yoga, doing various duties throughout their life. Buddha held out to his followers as a reward for their discipline 'Arhatship,' or an escape from the evils of transmigration.

In accordance with Buddhism, one who has gained the supreme knowledge (bodhi or sambodhi) and reached the goal is called the Buddha or the Sambuddha. Before becoming a Buddha, anyone who strives for Buddhahood is a Bodhisattva. The Bodhisattva stage is the stage of discipline preparatory to the attainment of "Bodhi", The word "Bodhisattva" literally means, a being whose characteristics (or sattva) and aim are enlightenment (bodhi). Gautama was a Bodhisattva in his previous existences and also during his historical existence up to the time when he attained enlightenment and became the Buddha. It is a belief among the Buddhists that whosoever attains the supreme knowledge, possesses among other supernatural faculties the privilege of remembering his own Jatakas (past existences) and even those of others. This gift of extra lucid intuition or in other words "divine sight," no one of course, was considered to possess in a more eminent degree than Gautama the Buddha. The Pali work entitled the 'Jatakas' contains five hundred and fifty descriptions of his (Gautama's) previous existences. Gautama as Bodhisattva is supposed to have passed through all forms of existence before he was reborn as Gautama. In the Jatakas we find Gautama mounting one by one the rungs of the ladder of beings—the whole embryology of his Bodhisattva,—till in his last incarnation, as the son of Suddhodhana, he appeared as the deliverer of mankind. By the authority of the biographical scheme in the Chulla Niddesa we are justified in broadly terming all the scenes from the life of Buddha as 'Jatakas,' although in later Buddhist nomenclature, the term Jataka has been restricted only to those birth-stories which narrated the career of the Bodhisattva in his previous existences. According to the biographical scheme of the Pali Jataka Commentary, the Bodhisattva career starts from the moment prior to the attainment of Buddhahood. In this scheme, the narration of incidents of the last existence of the Boddhisattva, forms only a nidana or introduction to the Jatakas proper. The stories of his past existences are strictly known as the Jatakas. Although many of the Jatakas

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

are now irrevocably lost, the motifs that still survive are considerable in number.

In conformity to the Jatakas, Gautama had passed through all created forms in his progress to nirvana, first animal, then woman, and finally man. So in the early Indian sculptures depicting the Jatakas, we find the animal-world worshipping the Illumination of Buddha. They share also in the worship of the sacred places. The early Indian Artists (subjective) did not portray Buddha's bodily form, which had for ever vanished, being content to attest his spiritual presence by silent symbols—the footprints, the tree, the wheel, and so forth. The symbols received the willing homage of the whole creation in the absence of their departed Master. Weird winged figures hovering in the air, snake-headed or fish-tailed monsters emerging from their caverns, or haunting the deep, offer their silent homage to the Lord of all. The monkeys bow down in adoration before the Wheel of the Law. The deer from the forest calls to her little ones to join in adoration of the Lord of the deer who had once offered his life for them. The wild elephants are seen coming to pour libations over the sacred tree under which Buddha sat. Men, women, and even the gods appear as devout worshippers of the Bo-trees. The sculptural representations of the scenes from the Jatakas, impress on the minds of the masses, the universal fellowship of man and the unity of all creation. The symbolism implied in them has a twofold significance, firstly it suggests the unsurpassed greatness of Gautama the Buddha and secondly it shows a universal trend of evolution in nature towards perfection through the attainment of Bodhi.

The doctrine of Karma calls this earth as Karma Bhumi or the sphere of Karma and herein is the greatest and best chance for man to become perfect. He enjoys the effects of his good work and, therefore, he performs good actions for that purpose. When this idea of salvation by Karma took firm hold of the Indian mind, it became areligious duty on his part to do the most strenuous, the most laborious work, the good effect of which may endure for a long time. For the greater toil involved in the work the greater would be the merit won. It was to this religious zeal for Karma that the works of Indian Art owed its progress to a great extent. It was a general belief that the decoration of a relic-shrine, temple, or monastery with high reliefs in stone would bring heavy reward in a future existence, not only to the artists but also to those who provided them with donations. In his last injunctions to Ananda

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Buddha more particularly pointed out that "Bhagawa" likewise "dwelt on the merit to be acquired by building thupa over relics of Tathagata, Pache-Buddha, and Sawaka"; and that they who prayed at the shrines that would be raised to him, would be born in heaven. Therefore, the erection of a stupa has always been regarded by the Buddhists as a work of merit, which brings its author a step nearer to salvation. The dedication of stupas was held more meritorious when made within the precincts of an old and renowned sacred fane, whose reflected sanctity could fall on models; and hence it is that they are met with in large numbers round the most ancient stupas. From the numerous names of donors inscribed upon the posts, cross-bars, and coping it would seem likely that pious laymen sought to win merit for themselves by building them in the more costly and permanent material. The sculptures in the precious metals were often the gift of kings and other wealthy donors.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE BHAGAVATAS AND THE GITA

The history of the Bhagavatas must have begun several centuries before the Christian era, for there are allusions to them in 'Panini' and the Niddesa. The word "Bhagavat" is a very old one. In the Rgveda as well as in the Atharva-veda the term has been used in the sense of blissful and happy. In the Mahabharata it came to denote Vishnu as Narayana or Vasudeva as their supreme god. The evidences of the Niddesa as well as of Patanjali show that Vasudeva was a name of God Bhagavat. Dr. Ray Chowdhry points out that Krishna, the son of Devaki was the same as Vasudeva, the founder of the Bhagavata system. Yamunacharya in his Agama Pramanya, suggests very strongly that the Bhagavata sect was non-Vedic in its origin. Recent researches leave no doubt that Krishna Vasudeva of Mathura was a human teacher, belonging to the republican Kshatriya clan known as Satvatas or Vrishnis, a branch of the Yadava tribe. In the Gita, Krishna says that 'of the Vrsnis I am Vasudeva'. The Yadava clan originally settled in Saurastra or the Kathiawad Peninsula and thence spread to Mathura.

The worship of Vasudeva Krishna seems to be alluded to by Megasthenes in the last quarter of the fourth century B. C. In his account of India, Megasthenes speaks of the Sourasenoi—an Indian tribe in whose land are two great cities, Methora and Kleisobora, through which flows the navigable river Jobares—as worshipping Heracles. 'Methora' in all probability means Mathura and 'Jobares'—Jumna. It is probable that Heracles is Hari, which is a second name of Vasudeva. At the time of Panini, Vasudeva was regarded as God and that his followers were called Vasudevaka. From the above mentioned evidences, we learn that the Bhagavata philosophy must have arisen long before the establishment of the Maurya dynasty. From the Ghosundi and Besnagar inscriptions we come to learn that later on the Bhagavata religion had overstepped the boundaries of the Mathura region and spread to the Indian borderland and that its fame had reached the ears of non-Indian peoples. In the Besnagar inscription, Heliodorus describes himself as a great devotee of Bhagavat and he erected a pillar bearing an image of Garuda. In the Nanaghat inscription, Vasudeva and Samkarsana appear together as deities to whom adorations are addressed along with other gods. The name 'King Vasudeva' of the Kanva dynasty suggests that the Kanvas were

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

of the Bhagavata faith. The progress of the Bhagavata religion was in no way interrupted by the revival of Buddhism during the Kushan period. Both prospered together. One of the kings of the Kushan dynasty was actually called Vasudeva who succeeded Huvishka and it seems then that the Bhagavata religion spread all over Northern India at that time.

In the light of the uncontradicted tradition of the Mahabharata and the Pancaratra literature, the Gita is to be regarded as a work of the Bhagavata School. The Mahabharata associates the Bhagavata Gita with the doctrine of Krishna Vasudeva. The Bhagavata Gita distinctly embodies the doctrine of spirit and matter as it was held by the earlier school of the theistic Sankhya. The Sankhya system is known to have been founded by the sage Kapila, and the Sankhya Sutras are also attributed to him. A study of the Upanishads shows that in some of them there are elements here and there which mark the growth of ideas which later were thrown into systematic form in the Sankhya. However, it appears that in the pre-Gita period there were two paths, one was the path of Jnana (knowledge) and the other, the path of Karma (Action). The purpose of the Gita was to bring about a reconciliation between those two paths, by showing that the path of Knowledge leads to the path of Action. The path of knowledge alone cannot lead us anywhere; for without work even the body cannot be made to live. Even those who adhere to the path of knowledge must perform the obligatory and occasional duties. So long as we have our bodies, the necessity of our own nature will drive us to work and, therefore, it is impossible for us to give up all work. It must be remembered that the Gita believes in the doctrine of Karma and the bondage of Karma that binds us to this world. But the chief characteristic prescribed by the Gita is that the bondage of Karma is due to the existence of attachment, passion, and desires. There is nothing good or bad in the actions themselves; it is only our desires and attachments which make the actions produce their bad effects with reference to us, and which render them sinful tor us. If the fruits of actions are given up, then the actions can no longer bind us to them. Moreover, if actions are performed from a sense of obedience to scriptural commands, caste-duties or duties of customary morality, then such actions, inspite of their bad consequences, would not be regarded as bad. The main purpose of the Gita is not to find out how one can tear asunder the bonds of Karma and stop rebirth, but to prescribe the true rule of the

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

performance of one's duties. The Gita is not against the performance of Vedic sacrifices but according to its fundamental idea the sacrifices should be performed without any personal attachment, out of regard for the sacred duty of the performance.

This detachment from sense-pleasures or Anashaktabhava, is to be attained through devotion to God or Bhakti-Yoga. A man should, therefore, surrender all his desires for selfish ends and dedicate all his actions to God and be in communion with Him, and yet continue to perform the normal duties of his caste and situation of life. If a person dedicates all his actions to Broahmo and performs his duties without attachment then sinfulness in his actions cannot cleave, to him, just as water cannot cleave to the leaves of a lotus plant :—

"ब्रह्मण्याधाय कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा करोति यः
लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवाम्भसा ।"

In the philosophy of the Vedanta and Buddha the doctrine of devotion or Bhakti can hardly be found, though here and there faint traces of it may be perceived. But the path of devotion or Bhakti is introduced clearly for the first time in the Gita. The God in the Gita is not a God of abstract philosophy or theology, but as a friend who incarnates Himself for the good of man" :—

"अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम्"

and shares his joys and sorrows with him, and to whom a man could cling for support in troubles and difficulties and even appeal for earthly goods. The image-worship with elaborate rituals and erection of large temples for them were characteristic features of the Bhagavata religion. The verses :

पत्रं पुष्पं फलं तोयं यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति
तदहं भक्त्युपहृतमश्नामि प्रयतात्मनः ॥

speak of adoration with water, flowers and leaves, which undoubtedly refers to image-worship. Image-worship is openly encouraged in the Gita ;

"समं सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन्तं परमेश्वरम् ।
विनश्यत्स्वविनश्यन्तं यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥"

"He, who sees the Lord Supreme existing equally in all beings, the Imperishable in things that perish, sees Him indeed."

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

God is one,—He differs only in names and forms. He reveals Himself unto a devotee in whatever form he wishes to see Him. Yamunacharya suggests very strongly that image-worship, image-making, image-repairing and temple-building had their origin in the Bhagavata sect, That the Bhagavatas used to worship images and build images and temples is also evident from the fact that most of the available Pancaratra works are full of details about image-building and image-worship.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE THREE STAGES

The idea of Ekamev-Advitiyam, the One without the second, did not occur to the undeveloped mind of the pre-Vedic Aryans. They venerated ghosts, demons, and the departed spirits of their forefathers whom they thought superior to Nature. They worshipped them because they saw in them above all things greater freedom than in themselves. The spirits can pass through walls, fly through the air and change their shapes which a man cannot do. Physical barriers present no obstacles to the spirits. Moreover, these pre-Vedic Indians respected the spirits because they felt that in some unknown way those beings were greater, more powerful than themselves and limited their freedom. They, therefore, sought to propitiate them in order to prevent them from molesting them. In their drawings or sculptures, the representation of the spirits assumed a terrible shape; the attributes of terror and fear predominated all other considerations. The type by which alone they could convey expression, could only be found in the type of form by which they were surrounded. They considered, no doubt, that their only mode of expressing superhuman powers was by the casting of images into unions of human with animal attributes.

In the early Vedic age, comes the notion of permanence. The early Vedic Indians observed that nothing of this earth is lasting, that the loftiest tree, the loveliest flower, the strongest animal, the hardest rock are all subject to decay; nay, that man himself is nought but dust, and that to dust does he return. But they closely observed the perpetual recurrence of seasons, the unchanged Sun, and other elements such as water, fire, and air. So in process of time these various elements of nature became the objects of worship for the early Vedic Aryans. The Rgveda is a great hymnology to the personified forces of nature.

But as their view of Nature expanded, there developed the idea of a Supreme Being a permanent Being in the back-ground, who is outside this visible universe and governs from that place this eternally changing and evanescent world. He was looked upon as far away, up in the heavens somewhere, sitting on a throne as a great judge and a punisher of the bad and a rewarder of the good and so on. Thus when this monotheistic idea first appeared, the Upanishadic age began. The Upanishadic Indians, when they advanced spiritually, began to feel that God was not

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

a distant God but the Soul of all souls. They prescribed Jnana Yoga (the path of Knowledge) for the realisation of the Infinite. Through Jnana Yoga we bring Him nearer and nearer, until we find that He is all the time within us, the self of our own self. Then and then alone all the perplexities of the heart smooth away and all the crookedness are made straight. Then vanishes the delusion of manifoldness and Nature or Maya, instead of being a horrible, hopeless dream, becomes beautiful.

But the world is not only spiritual but also moral. Life is an education. In the moral sphere no less than the physical, whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. Every act produces its natural result in future character. It deletes chance, for it says that even the smallest happening has its cause in the past and its result in the future. The law of Karma does not accept the theory of predetermination or the idea of an over-ruling providence. Why under the reign of an almighty God of this universe should so many diabolical things be allowed to happen? Why should there be so much more misery than happiness and so much more wickedness than good? All these facts are explained by the Law of Karma and which shows the way out. The Law of Karma holds that man can control his future by creating in the present what will produce the desired effect. Moreover, a life does not begin at birth or end at death but is a link in an infinite series of lives, each of which is conditioned and determined by the acts done in previous existences. Animal, human and divine existences may all be linked in the chain. A man's deeds, if good, may exalt him to the heavens, if evil, may degrade him to life as a beast. The release from the series of rebirths is called Nirvana which can be attained through Karma Yoga.

In accordance with the teachings of the Gita, the bondage of Karma is due to the existence of attachment, passion and desires. And therefore, if actions are performed without them or in other words if the fruits of actions are given up, the actions can no longer bind us to them. This detachment from sense-pleasures can be attained through the Bhakti Yoga or devotion to God. Bhakti knows no bargaining. Wherever there is any seeking for something in return there can be no Bhakti. So long as there is in us any idea of deriving this or that favour from God in return for our respect and allegience to Him, there can be no true Bhakti growing in our hearts. The Bhakta or devotee loves God because He is lovable; there is no other motive originating or directing this divine emotion

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

of the true devotee. Bhakti knows no fear. They who worship God through fear are like the primitive or pre-Vedic people, quite undeveloped as man. So long as there is any fear in the heart there can be no Bhakti, Bhakti conquers all fear.

Now, so far as we have seen, there are so-called three paths leading to the realization of the Infinite. Those three paths namely Jhana Yoga, Karma Yoga, and Bhagti Yoga, in my estimation are neither separate from nor contradictory to one another. In my opinion they are but the three stages that are harmoniously knit together in a gradation, culminating in the realization of the Universal Soul, In the pre-Vedic Age we lived the life of Avidya ; we were confined within our own self, Avidya is the ignorance that darkens our consciousness, and tends to limit it within the boundaries of our personal self. The early Vedic Indian could not feel himself beyond his personal surroundings, his greater self was blotted out, his truth was unrealised. But his individual soul by its nature was impelled to seek for the Universal. The prayer that rose up from his whole being was, therefore, the deepest and the most earnest prayer that has ever risen from the human heart "O thou self-revealing One, reveal thyself in me." In the search he gradually became aware that the key to find out the Universal One was in the consciousness of the soul, The aim which the Jnana Yoga or the path of Knowledge has in view, is "Know thine own soul," In other words, the stage of Jnana Yoga enabled the seeker to realise the Universal Soul in every human soul, But to find the Infinite One which is in him or a being alike him, is not the ultimate end of man. Man becomes perfect and attains his fullest expression, when he realises the Great Soul in the irrational animals as well, The teaching of Karma Yoga is to cultivate this moral power to the highest extent, to know that our field of activities is not bound to the plane of our narrow "Human-Self" only, When a man attains the awakenment from the sleep of human-self to that extension of consciousness, he becomes Buddha. The doctrine of Karma Yoga is "Ahimsa," which admonishes us to free ourselves from the confinement of the life of the human-self and to apprehend the Infinite Soul in the souls of the dumb creatures as well. This was the reason why in India a whole people who once were meat eaters gave up taking animal food to cultivate the sentiment of universal sympathy for life. an event unique in the history of mankind.

But Man is not a detached being, he has a universal aspect, When he does not realise his kinship with the whole world, he

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

lives in a prison-house whose walls are alien to him. When he meets the eternal spirit even in all inanimate objects, then is he emancipated, for then he discovers the fullest significance of the world into which he is born; then he finds himself in perfect truth. and his harmony with the all is established. The extinction of this line of demarcation between the animate and inanimate is the function of Bhakti Yoga. This is the attainment of the full awakening and is the revealing in us of the infinite joy by the light of love. At the stage of Bhakti Yoga we attain our world-consciousness, and find the Immanent God manifested in the world of matter as well, In Bhakti or devotion the sense of difference is obliterated and the human soul fulfils its purpose in perfection, transcending the limits of itself and reaching across the threshold of the Infinite. Therefore Bhakti is the final or highest bliss that man can attain to, for through it alone he truly knows that he is more than himself, and that he is at one with the All.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

HINAYANA AND MAHAYAN BUDDHISM

After the Maha-Parinirvana of Buddha, things changed and dissensions crept in his ethical system. Though the Elders for a time succeeded in checking all schismatic efforts of the Younger, it was at Vaisali that they parted company, never to be united again. The Mahavastu Avadana says that due to their fundamental and far reaching difference, the whole Buddhist camp was divided into three 'Yanas' or classes, namely, (1) Bodhisattva Yana, (2) Pratyekabuddha Yana, and (3) Cravakar Yana. The Bodhisattva Yana believed in the Bodhi or intelligence or wisdom and they directed all their spiritual energy towards realising and developing it for the sake of their fellow brothers. The Pratyekabuddha Yana were solitary thinkers or philosophers. Retiring into a solitude and calmly contemplating on the evanescence of wordly pleasures, they endeavoured to attain their own salvation, but remained unconcerned with the sufferings of their fellow beings. The Cravakar Yana did not possess any intellect that enabled them to think independently and to find out by themselves the way to final salvation. They were to hear from a Buddha and to wait till the advent of another Buddha, for their emancipation.

Buddhism continued in this state till the rise of the Mahayana Buddhism. The Mahayanists were originally the Bodhisattva Yana. They considered the Pratyekabuddhas as well as the Cravakas to be adherents of Hinayanism. The Mahayanists extolled their own church as Maha (Great) and called the other one Hina (Humble or Little). The Mahayana sect was profoundly influenced by the Bhagavatism and the Bhakti Yoga, which holds that the human adorer wants something concrete through which to adore, rather than to explore the void of metaphysical subtleties. The Mahayanist leader Nagarjuna and his powerful disciple Aryadeva were the apostles of the Bhakti marga (path). They found means of expression for the deep-seated religious instincts of the masses through the way of devotion to the Divine Teacher, rather than through the dry agnostic philosophy of the Hinayana School. Like the Bhagavatas, the Mahayanists imposed no restriction upon the worship of images, and the Mahayana pantheon developed on the model of the Bhagavata pantheon. In Mahayanism, Buddha takes the place of the personified Broahma of the Vedanta. Devotion to to Buddha and the worship of his images formed a more essential

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

part of Mahayanism than the pursuit of a grim austere life of morality.

The distinction* between the Mahayana and Hinayana Buddhism is graphically described in the first book of the Mahayanasuttra-alamkara attributed to Asanga. Their points of agreement are as follows: Both of them accept firstly that Buddha as a Bodhisattva remained in the Tushita Heaven prior to his descent to this earth; secondly that Buddha as Sakya-simha was born in the womb of Maya Devi who saw in her dreams a white elephant entering into her womb; thirdly that Buddha was born in the Lumbini garden, obtained Bodhi (Enlightenment) under the Bo-tree at Buddha Gaya, preached his first sermon at Sarnath, and entered into Nirvana at Kusinagara. The pivot of distinction between the Mahayanists and Hinayanists lies in the following questions :—

(1) *Divinity of Buddha* : The Hinayanists regard him (Buddha) as the Progenitor of the Law, and calls him a super-man, i. e., nothing but a man with extraordinary intellect. Buddha's precepts and examples are to be followed by each individual for reaching Nirvana or freedom from bondage, and cessation of existence or practically annihilation. But the Mahayanists look upon Buddha as a divinity and as such an eternal being coming to earth only for the salvation or deliverance of the being tortured by Mara, the Evil One.

(2) *The Buddhist Triad* : The Hinayanists believe in the Buddhist Triad and revere and worship it in the order of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, i. e., the Promulgator of the Law first, the Law, second, and the receipients of the Law, last. But the Mahayanists change the order into Dharma, Buddha, and Sangha.

(3) *Nirvana* : The Hinayanists will be satisfied if he is emancipated from the bond of worldly sufferings from the evil of birth and rebirth. He does not look beyond his own salvation. But the Mahayanists take just the opposite view, make compassion (karuna) their motto and set themselves to work vigorously for the uplift of all sentient beings from man to the smallest insect. In fact they seem to be more solicitous about the emancipation of the latter than of their own selves.

The history of Buddhism shows that Hinayanism the original form of Buddhism had its origin in Northern India. Through the

* The points of agreement and disagreement between the Mahayanists and the Hinayanists had profound effects upon Indian sculptures.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

efforts of Asoka's royal patronage, Hinayana Buddhism not only spread all over India but even far outside its boundaries and planted its outposts in Burma, Ceylon, Siam, Alexandria, and Khotan. Tradition asserts that some Hinayanists settled in Khotan during Asoka's reign and introduced Buddhism into the Tarim basin and other regions commonly called Central Asia. In the course of fifty years after the death of Asoka his descendants lost their power. Pushyamitra Sunga treacherously killed the last Maurya King namely Vrihadratha and occupied the throne. From Tibetan and Chinese records we come to know that Pushyamitra had been regarded as one of the greatest persecutors of Buddhism. He is said to have burnt Buddhist monasteries and slain many monks from Magadha to Jalandhara (Punjab). Consequently Hinayana Buddhism survived in Southern India and is termed as Southern Buddhism. The history of Mahayana Buddhism shows that it, in all probability, germinated in the South (where the offshoots of the Mahasanghikas had their centres of activities), passed to the eastern countries and lastly prospered in the north with the growth of the Kushan Empire. Kanishka gave a great impetus to the propagation of the Mahayana sect in Northern India. Subsequently Mahayana Buddhism is known as Northern Buddhism. From Northern India it spread to China, Tibet, and Nepal and again from those places to Mongolia and Japan. Recently the discovery of many Mahayana Sanskrit manuscripts from Nepal by Mr. Brian Houghton Hodgson has entirely revolutionised the old idea that all the Buddhist Canons were written in Pali. Mahayanism is embodied in these Sanskrit manuscripts in detail.

In the seventh century A. D., Japan was the furthest outpost of Buddhism in the East and Mecca then closely connected with Indo-Arabian coasting trade, the outpost in the west. Hiuen Tsang gives some indication of the western extension of Buddhism in his time by mentioning Buddhist monasteries in Persia. Alberuni the Arabian historian states that in former times, Khorasan, Persia, Iraq, Mosul and the country up to the frontiers of Syria were Buddhistic. Hinayana Buddhism appealed strongly to the Arab tribesmen and the Hinayanists' denunciation of idolatry made the earlier sect of Islam namely the Sunnis furious iconoclasts. The Sunnis, therefore, banned paintings of animate beings as idolatrous. The language and literature of the Sunnis were Arabic and all the Muhammadans whose religious teaching was confined to the Arabic Schools would in ordinary circumstances be Sunni. The Shiahs,

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

the dissenting sect though originally of the same race as the Sunnis, yet absorbed into their own teaching a great deal of the Mahayana Buddhism the later development of Buddhism which extended to the borders of Parthia and Persia. The Persians who were originally Mahayanists, therefore, embraced Islam of the Shiah sect. It is true that the Sunnis maintain the validity of the election of the first four Khalifs or the four friends of Muhammad and the Shiahs denounce them as usurpers and assert the claims of Ali, who married Fatima the daughter of the Prophet, and was the father of the Shiah martyrs, namely Hasan and Husain. But their differences regarding idolatry are originally due to the two main sectarian groups of Buddhism.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THE ORIGIN OF THE BUDDHA-IMAGE

The origin of the Buddha-image has been a subject of keen controversy among the Archaeologists. Almost all of them, as I have read, lay greater emphasis on the non-essential features of the image than on the original or real cause. Buddha's subjective contact with the highest truth marks the beginning of Indian Art (Symbolic). Some scholars are of opinion that Indian Art does not really commence until the reign of Asoka i. e., two centuries and a quarter after Buddha's Nirvana. It is quite clear from Asoka's great monuments that the Indian Artists owed their encouragement to the religious zeal of the emperor who ruled over the whole of Aryavarta. But Indian sculptures of the Maurya period are mature ones and, therefore, Prof. Percy Gardner rightly observes that there can be no doubt that Indian Art had an earlier beginning. Unfortunately we have no remains of such an early age. The best explanation of this fact is that the early works of Indian Art were mainly constructed of wood and other perishable materials, ill-fitted to withstand the ravenous tooth of time.

The earliest monuments of Symbolic Indian Art, however, happen to be Buddhistic. Although we know that both Jainism and early Brahmanical Hinduism continued to attract multitudes of adherents during the Mauryan period, but due to their strict subjective ascetism no works of Art could be dedicated to the services of those religions. The history of Indian Art begins with the symbolic sculptures connected with Buddhism. In those sculptures Buddha is never represented in human form but only by symbols. No picture of Buddha appears on the reliefs of this older period. Only the signs of his activity were represented by the symbols of the footprints or the sacred Bo-trees or a Stupa, and they were universally venerated. The railings of Buddha Gaya, Barhut, Sanchi, and Sarnath show unmistakable signs of worshipping everything that Buddha made sacred by his magic touch. The railings show bas-reliefs representing innumerable scenes from Buddha's life as recorded in the Lalita Vistara or the Mahavastu Avadana as well as stories from the Jatakas. But we never meet there with any representation of the Great Master himself.

In the early Vedic period the mass of the Indian people worshipped the personifications of natural phenomena in the open air,

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Their physical appearances have been described in the Vedas, They are said to have faces. arms, belly, feet like human beings. But there is no evidence in the Rgveda to show that their images were made in that period, The pursuit of Atman as the only Reality led the Indian mind of the Upanishadic period, inwards, The contemplation of forms was resisted and eschewed as a hinderance to the contemplation of the Formless as the highest truth. Such a strict subjective stage was after all not favourable to image-worship. Then came Buddha who maintained the same view regarding the image-worship. The Hinayanists held that as Buddha attained Nirvana, his bodily appearance could not be represented. In the history of Indian Art, during the predominance of the Hinayanists, the Indian Artists did not portray with brush or chisel the person of Buddha. It would have been a rude shock to the pious Hinayanists ; and it is owing to this reason that on the early reliefs of Buddha Gaya, Barhut and Sanchi, we do not find the Buddha-image.

It is admitted by some scholars that in India images were made since 500 B. C. Panini and Patanjali were familar with the images. Only about half-a-dozen detached life-size figures assignable to the third and the second centuries B. C., are the earliest known figure sculptures. But these images which are evidently figures of Yakshas and Yakshinis, some of whom, bearing chauri or fly-whisks, must not be regarded as works of Indian Art. Hopkins states that an image of Hercules was carried in front of the army of Poros as he advanced against Alexander. This must have been an image of Yaksha. Kharavela's Hathi-Gumpha inscription mentions a wooden image of Ketu, a human hero of the Yaksha type. The early Buddhist monuments of Central and Eastern India yield ample evidence of the different elements of popular religion of those areas. But the deliberate exclusion of the Buddha-figure from the reliefs on those monuments, together with the absence of images of the Jinas, indicates that the cult of anthropomorphism did not yet form part of the Indian religions during that period. The tendency to conceive the Ekamev-advitiyam more and more in definitely anthropomorphic terms begins in or about the third century B. C. Accordingly the sense of the Indian Artists for sculptural representation of the Man-God was awakened before the rise of the Kushan power in India. It is not difficult to discover that the impulse came from the Bhagavata Gita and that the stimulus for making the images of Buddha and the Jinas came from the Bhakti Cult. The Kushan period was just the age when the grammar of Yoga and

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Bhakti movements in India became definitely settled. Consequently crystallisation of the iconographic forms of most of the Indian religions took place. In accordance with the Bhagavatism, the more commanding spirits, who ruled the passions of their fellow men by the ascendancy of genius, and unbending firmness of will, were held to be mortal emanations or avatars of the Supreme Being, and after death, they were exalted to the rank of demi-gods. The Bhakti Yoga gave the Mahayana Buddhists the impluse to worship the image of their Great Master. The Mahayana leaders namely Nagarjuna and Aryadeva were the apostles of the Bhakti marga. Their homage raised Buddha upon the throne of the deity, which he himself had left empty. The Gita taught them, "Whenever there is an extraordinary spiritual power manifested by external man, know that God is there; it is from Him that manifestation comes"—

"यद्यद्विभूतिमत्सत्त्वं श्रीमदूर्जितमेव वा।
तत्तदेवावगच्छ त्वं मम तेजोऽशसम्भवम्॥"

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

SUBJECTIVE AND OBJECTIVE INDIAN ART

Krishna Vasudeva preached in the Gita the highest truth of this universe in twofold aspect: one is the truth of the physical nature of this world and the other is the truth of the reality behind it. The Absolute Broahmo as suggested in the Gita, manifested Itself by splitting Itself as it were, into two eternal substances known as soul and matter. The Gita has dealt with both these aspects, that is, it regards the source of man's spiritual insight as two-fold: subjective and objective. The motto of the subjective side is 'Renunciation' and one's whole energy is directed inwards; while that of the objective side is 'Enjoyment' and the energy is projected outwards. One's subjective learning consists in the knowledge of the Self or the Subject, while the objective one, in the knowledge of the not-self or the object i.e., perishable creation.

Let us consider the Subjective and Objective procedures in Indian Art, more fully :—

Subjective Indian Art

The Subjective theory of knowledge regards the source of truth as not empirical perception but an inwardly known model. The sensation of the internal space within our living body is the analogy according to which the world is known to us, experienced and beheld within ourselves. How are perceptions made? The wall opposite sends an impression to us but we do not see the wall until our mind receives it. The external sensation of sight is brought to us by the eyes; from them, it is carried by the sensory nerves to the brain. But these external eyes are not the organs of vision; they are only the external instruments. If the real organ behind, which receives the sensation in the brain, were destroyed though we had twenty eyes, yet we could not see anything. Thus all knowledge comes through our senses plus mind. The external world is simply the suggestion, the occasion, which sets us to study our mind, and the object of our study is always our own mind. The falling of an apple gave the suggestion to Newton and he studied his own mind. Like fire in a piece of flint, knowledge exists in the mind; suggestion is the friction which brings it out. But even these are not sufficient. The instruments may bring the sensation from outside, the mind may attach itself to the organ, and yet the perception may not be complete. One more factor is necessary; there must be a reaction within. With this reaction comes knowledge or perception. Yet,

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

even this is not the end. Still another step remains. We cannot form a picture on a thing that is itself rushing away. The background must be stationary because the rays of light which we are to throw on it are moving, and these moving rays of light require to be gathered, united, co-ordinated, and completed, upon something which does not move. The same is the case with the sensations which these organs of our receive within and present to the mind, and which the mind, in its turn presents to the intellect. The process cannot be complete unless there is something permanent in the background, This something upon which the mind is painting all these pictures, this something upon which our sensations. carried by the mind and intellect, are placed and grouped and formed into a unity, is what is called the soul of man which is free and permanent. The body is dying every minute ; the mind is constantly changing ; but beyond this momentary sheathing of gross matter, beyond even the finer covering of the mind is the soul or atman the true Self of man, the Permanent and the Ever Free. Similarly in the universe also, behind the Universal mind, exists the Great Soul, and that is called God, Who never changes, the Ever Pure and the Immutable. The aim of the Subjective Indian Artist is ,to represent this reality that lies behind the appearance of things. His art is in keeping with his philosophy. The world perceived by the senses is unreal ; it is a veil behind which reality lies hidden. We see this world through our five senses. and if we had another sense, we would see it as something else. If we had still another sense, it would appear as something different again. So on we go. The Subjective Artist, therefore, does not copy what he receives with his outward senses, he meditates upon his subject, and then gives form and colour to that which is permanent. The inquiry of the Subjective Indian Artist has been always through the soul, for reality can only be spiritually discerned. Ths spiritual law holds that only like can know like.

Again, things are actually not seen as they appear but imagined as they are. The whole of Nature is like that of a screen which hides the reality behind it. The Subjective Indian Artist attempts to express the truth that is behind or within. Their tendency is, therefore, to look for reality in ideas rather than in objects, in the abstract rather than in the concrete. Nature remains to them a veil, not a revelation and Subjective Art is not imitation of this veil or maya, it is to manifest what lies behind. To mistake the maya for reality is an error to them. Subjective Indian Art is,

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

therefore, to be strictly regarded as a kind of diagram, expressing certain ideas, and not as the likeness of anything on earth. The parts of the figures in Subjective Indian Art are not organically related, for it is not contemplated that they should function biologically, but ideally related. This does not mean that the various parts are not related, or that the whole is not a unity, but that the relation is mental rather than functional. Thus the accidents proper to the lotus of the botanist are omitted from the subjective representation of the lotus and it is not recognizable to those who do not understand the Subjective Theory of Indian Art.

In accordance with the Subjective Theory, everything that comes out of the senses, or through the mind or intellect must of necessity be limited. Everything, when limited by the senses or the mind, becomes finite. God is unlimited and He cannot be limited by the mind because then He is no longer the Absolute at all. Moreover, anything that becomes limited by our own senses or mind, we know, but when a thing remains beyond our senses or mind we cannot know it through them. God's form is not within the field of vision, none can, therefore see Him with the eyes. But he is revealed to us by the intuition of our heart. Therefore to represent God, the Subjective Artist must penetrate those sheaths and rise to the sheath of intuition; and His representation is the product of the artist's intuition. After emptying his heart of all extraneous interests, the Subjective Artist should visualize within himself an intelligible image, he must identify himself therewith, and then proceed to the work of embodiment in stone, metal or pigment. He thus acts on the Subjective Principle, "Deva Bhutwa, Devam Yajet." that is, by becoming the God, one should worship the God. This identification of subject with the object is the chief aim of the Subjective Indian Artist. It should be an insult to credit him with observation, for to observe implies a separation from that which is observed. He says that the process of possessing into trance is analogous to death. The spirit in its spiritual or ethic body frees itself from all the trammels of the physical frame so that it can use its spiritual faculties. His works are less a report of something seen than a distillation of a mood or a spirit felt. His most potent language is not the detail or outlines of the composition observed, but the intimation that came to him in contemplation.

The Subjective Theory, no doubt, actually represents the mental attitude of the Indian Subjective Artist. To set aside one's personal

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

thought is the main motive of the process of intuition. But it must not be supposed that every artist can easily follow out the Subjective Principle which involves that the true knowledge of an object cannot be obtained by merely empirical observation or reflex registration, but only when the knower and the known, seer and seen, Ist and Art, meet in an act transcending distinction. The later Indian Subjective Artists, therefore, began to translate accurately in terms of a plastic form the idea conveyed by the gifted persons, seers, prophets or rishis who visualised in the course of their search after the Divinity. Descriptions of the gods and goddesses as having limbs, garments, weapons, or other attributes are found in the Vedic lauds and myths. The Vedic gods possess many attributes superior to human beings. The divine personalities are supplied with many pairs of members; above all, they have numerous arms to wield the diverse weapons an inseparable symbol of divinity. The same logic worked when the Subjective Artists added wings to the images of gods to signify their divine superiority. Thus the later Subjective Indian Artists followed the Vedic peculiarities in making the divine representations and did not represent the conception of divinity in terms of a physically perfect healthy human body. They symbolised the divine image by forms not strictly in accordance with the known physiological laws, but rather by forms, which transcended the limits of ordinary human anatomy. And they represented their own subjective attitude by making their images close their eyes, as they were looking inward.

Objective Indian Art.

The Objective Theory with its main endeavour is always directed towards the realization of the Infinite through the finite. The Objective Indian Artists primarily get inspiration from Nature. A plain in nature furnishes the idea of a plane. Every variety of triangle is indicated by the outline of the snow clad peaks of the loftiest Himalayas. The thin clouds that sweep along the sky at sunset, hanging over the distant blue line of the horizon, form exquisite parallels, and where cut by the lines of trees and plants suggest every variety of figures. In her endless of variety of crystals, Nature furnishes the Objective Artists with models of the most consummate solids. In the rainbow they have her noblest arch. Associations with Nature supply the Objective Indian Artists with illimitable amounts of beauty as need fear no dishonour nor exhaustion and they always have the great delight of feeling that the more they draw, the more remain behind. The

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

contemplation of natural objects is often the immediate cause of their emotion. Nature speaks more intimately, more tenderly to those who embrace her more closely and pour themselves into her, to those who mingle their joys with the radiance of the sunlight, their sighs with the moanings of the winds and the whispers of the of the woods, and their tears with the flow of the waters. Only they, who touch certain chords on Nature's lyre and whose ears are attuned to them, can know her form and outer vesture, and her ever shifting aspects. The lovely blue of the sky, the tender pink upon the snow caps of the Himalayas, the fervid glow of ruddy sunset, the rosy tint of incense-breathing morn, the deepening purple of the thunder cloud, the soft green glades of spring, the full toned browns of autumn, with all their associations, bring a love letter to the heart of the Objective Indian Artist, to stir and move him with their deeper message of the Infinite, the inmost essence of all things. Nature holds up before him the finite which dwells in the Infinity. The Objective Artists represent the Infinite in terms of the finite. The deeper message of Nature reaches them and they give expression to truths that lie within the range of vision or the reach of ordinary perception.

It is the Bhakti Yoga that taught the Objective Indian Artists to regard the ordinary phenomenal world as the manifestation of God. The Supreme Soul is not only an abstract thing, but also a soul possessing all good qualities, which occasionally appears enshrined in matter. As one fire having entered the world assumes forms according to the shape of the different objects, so the One Soul that exists in all the beings appears in different forms in different objects and also without. When the Indian Objective Artists see God, they think of Him in the forms they have before them. The Bhakti Yoga tells them that He descends with His immaterial or spiritual person into any material substance as may be lovingly chosen by His votary, lending Himself to the sweet will of His worshipper. The Objective Indian Artists regard the prophets as the Man-Gods, the incarnations, the embodiments of God. The Omnipresent God cannot be seen until He is reflected by these giant lamps of the Earth. The vibration of light is every where, omnipresent, but we have to strike the light of the lamp before we can see the light. However much we may try, by struggle, by abstraction, by whatsoever method we like, still so long as we are a man in the world of man, our world is human, our religion is human, and our God is human. We all know that

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

God exists, and yet we do not see Him, we do not understand Him until He manifests Himself through His incarnations. God understands human failings and becomes a man to do good to humanity. The Objective Indian Artists know that God is without form or shape, but as soon as they begin to think of Him, He acquires both names and forms. He reveals Himself unto a devotee in whatever form he wishes to see Him. He is the essential spirit behind the world of matter as well as manifested in the world of matter. That is to say, the body of man and the body of nature is the body of God. " All men and women of this world are His living forms."—(Kabir). What can be more perfectly beautiful in every possible attribute than that image, which, as we have already seen, God created in His own ? It is said that God created man after His own image, so man represents God after his own image. Throughout the Objective Indian Art we are representing Him in the forms of Nature. It is the very strength and backbone of the Theory of Objective Indian Art. The representation of the Divine Being under purely natural forms is the characteristic of the Objective Indian Art. It were the Bhagavatas who with their philosophic views and attributes of Divinity (as contained in the Gita) conceived the idea of selecting the most perfect qualities from the most perfect human beings, and causing them to appear to coexist in the images of their divinities. It was due to Bhakti Yoga that the most beautiful and realistic images took place in India and obtained admiration and sympathy from the beholders. The most unique feature in the early images produced by the Objective Indian Artists, is the half-shut eyes; the deity with half-shut eyes does not express the meditative or subjective attitude of the artist but discloses his interest in the affairs of the outer world.

Now, we are in a position to understand that it is not in the ideal but the process where lies the gulf which separates the Subjective Artists from the Objective Artists of India. Both of them draw inspiration out through the exercise of their imagination, both of them aim at the representation of the Ekamev-advitiyam, while the former follows intuition, the latter is faithful to Nature.

Indian Art combined beauty with truth. Truth and Beauty cannot be separated in Indian Art. Beauty is a garment of Truth and co-extensive with itself. It has, therefore, been said that Beauty is Truth and Truth is Beauty. A piece of Art becomes universal, that is, appreciated in all ages and all countries, when Beauty and Truth have a happy combination. In Indian Art it is not the Beauty but that its conception is different with the Artists

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

of the two different schools. With the Subjective School the form that is auspicious, but not necessarily pleasing to the eyes, is beautiful. To the Subjective Artists the figure of the Mahapurusha (superman) characterized by thirty-two signs is the the ideal of human beauty. But the way in which the Objective Indian Artists seek to realise 'Beauty' is through natural forms. The beauty in Nature stirs their souls to its depths and makes them feel the gracious Presence in them that lures to knowledge, fires the aspirations and sets the souls yearning back to its source. Beauty says the Subjective Indian Artist, is not inherent in form or matter ; it belongs only to Spirit, and can only be apprehended by spiritual vision. According to him there is no beauty in a tree, or a flower, or a man or woman, as such ; the beauty lies in the divine idea which is impressed upon the Artist's heart which is tuned to receive it. He depends upon the spiritual beauty and not upon the beauty perceived by human senses. But the aim of the Objective Indian Artists is not to extract beauty from Nature, but to represent the beauty through the material universe ; the noumenon through phenomenon ; the reality through unreality, the soul through the matter. They aim at showing the unseen through the seen. The Objective Indian Art consists in the discovery of the forms in which God has already manifested Himself, rather than in the creation of any new form.

In Indian Art the two currents known as subjective and objective, are the two paths in the representation of the Ekamev-advitiyam. One grows out of intuition and the other gained from keen observation of nature and life. I do not mean that the artists who wanted to search after truth through internal nature were higher nor that those who wanted to represent it through external nature were wrong. They are the two modes of procedure, both of which must live, and should be thoroughly studied. And at the end we shall find that the invisible Infinite and the visible Infinite meet together and form the One without the Second. For the real truth is that we cannot live if we divide Him who is truth Himself into two parts. We must abide in Him within as well as without. In whichever aspect we deny Him we deceive ourselves and incur a loss. If we say that we would realize Him in introspection alone and leave Him out of our external activity, that we would enjoy Him by the love in our heart, but not worship Him by outward ministrations ; or if we say the opposite, and overweight ourselves on one side in the journey of our quest, we shall alike totter to our downfall. True Indian Art is calmly balanced in strength, in the correlation of the within and the without.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

SYMBOLISM IN INDIAN ART

All the experiences that are not realised through the path of reason, but immediately through an inner vision, are expressed through symbols. For example, it is though impossible to describe the ultimate reality, yet possible to indicate by means of symbols, aspects of it. Symbols have great influence on the human mind. We think symbolically. All our words are but symbols of the thought behind, and different people have come to use different symbols without knowing the reason why, Symbols are associated with the thoughts, and as the thought brings the symbol outside, so the symbol can bring thought inside. A symbolic expression is held to be the best possible formula by which allusion may be made to a relatively unknown thing, which is nevertheless recognized or postulated as existing. The use of any symbol implies a conviction, and generally a conventional agreement resting on authority that the relatively unknown, or it may be unknowable, thing cannot be any more clearly represented.

A symbol is not a sign. A sign is an analogous or abbreviated expression for a definitely known thing. It is true that in the decadence of Subjective Indian Art, symbols are replaced by what are merely signs. A symbol is not a substitute for the intuitional experience of something. Every icon is a symbol but not a substitute of the deity, It is the symbol or Pratika, that is, something which is near, steps towards the deity. The worship of the incarnations of God, e.g., Buddha, Krishna, Christ, constitute Pratika, a drawing near to the worship of God. We may worship a picture as God but not God as the picture. God in the picture is right, but the picture as God is wrong. God in the image is perfectly right. There is no danger there. But the image-God is a mere Pratika or symbol. The great danger of all these worships of Symbols is that we are helpless and obliged to substitute symbols for substances, pictures for realities. A symbolic representation should not be regarded as the crude form of picture. Some people undoubtedly think of symbol as a struggling for artistic expression in the infant stage,—an early attempt at design. The early efforts or expressions seen in the primitive cave paintings of very early pre-historic times, should not be taken for symbols but for signs. A symbol is not short-hand for a mental picture, Forms resembling symbols are found in great variety on the punch-marked coins which were in

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

general use from about 600 B. C., up to the beginning of the Kushan period or somewhat later. Some of them are not symbols at all, but, are seals of heraldic significance.

The important fact about the symbols in Indian Art, is that they were the accepted medium of communication between the Indian Artist and his spectator. They were taken for granted, and we can hardly expect to fully enter into the spirit of his Art, unless we also learn the meaning of its constantly recurring phrases. The development of symbolism in Indian Art was mainly due to the influence of the Upanishadic teachings. The Buddhists, the Jainas, and the Brahmans each employed symbols in senses of their own. The special religious meanings possible for each symbol must be considered in the light of their references to Avatars and their attributes. It should be remembered that a single symbol carries different meanings in different religions in India. For instance, the pediment sculptures of the Ananta (Orissa) include a standing woman-figure with elephants. In Buddhism this would represent the nativity of Buddha, in Brahmanism it is Gaja Lakshmi, but what it represents actually, unless perhaps the Nativity of Mahavira, we do not know. Similarly the symbols of the triratna and the chaitya tree, are somewhere Buddhist and elsewhere Jaina.

Now, let us be acquainted with the well-known symbols in Indian Art as follows :—

(1) *Lotus* :—The history of this symbol is sufficiently long and varied. The Mahanirvana Tantra gives the mystic meaning of this lotus-symbolism, "The root is Broahmo the Unknowable, from which all creation springs. The stalk is Maya, the unreality of world phenomena. The flower is the world itself. The fruit is Moksha, the soul-liberation when it is released from worldly desires." Growing in the mud, and yet so clean, the lotus is a symbol of purity. A lotus-pool with leaves and flowers in bud, widely opened and again dying down, is an image of the ebb and flow of human life (Samsara). Thus the lotus is an emblem of beauty, symbol of purity, of moral sensibility. When we compare the ground of its origin with the thing which grows thereon and therefrom, we find in lotus the symbol of detachment and transcendentability. The lotus in Brahmanical mythology represents Broahma, for he is the successor of Prajapati and is born of the waters. The lotus pedestal appears in Maurya and Sunga terracottas, at Barhut and Sanchi as the seat of Maya Devi, Lakshmi, and

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

later on employed in the case of all divine beings to denote miraculous birth and apparitional character. The representation of a lotus flower as the seat of a god, or beneath the feet of a standing figure of a god, is a conventional symbol representing the fact that the feet of the gods do not rest on the earth. The lotus-seat in the course of time became one of the common insignia of superhuman beings.

(2) *Siras-Chakra (Nimbus) or Prabha Mandal (Halo)*:—Siras-chakra or radiance is shown by a circular array of dots surrounding the heads of divinities in India. A plain halo is necessarily an early feature. The profoundly decorated halo is a special feature of the Buddha figure in the Gupta Period. The disk of light is covered all over with concentric bands of graceful ornament in which festoons and foliage alternate with conventional flowers. The decoration consisting of either a row of triangles, or a simple wavy line, or a creeper, and the motifs in each case are disposed of in the form of a circle along the edge of the halo. The triangles have their prototype in the lotus petals as shown on the halo behind the Buddha's head on the Shahji-ki-dheri casket. The fashion of a nimbus at the back of a figure, seems to me originated from the peacock's plumage. Others are of opinion that in Vedic ritual a golden disc was placed on the fire altar to represent the sun and later on when anthropomorphic image took its place upon the altar once empty or occupied by a symbol, the disc would remain at the back side and thus radiance was associated with the icons. For them it is hard to believe that the nimbus can have originated outside classic area of sun-worship. The earliest examples in India are found on coins of Hermaios and Maues. The Mahayana Buddhists took over the symbol to represent the deification of Buddha. For such an attribute put him on an equal footing with the deities represented with the nimbus. Both the Subjective as well as Objective Indian Artists took it from the Vedas as an attribute of divinity. In the early paintings of the Mughals, the nimbus is unknown. Jehangir took the symbol but not the creed, seizing on the halo as an excellent method for distinguishing the Mughal Emperor from all others. He fully believed in the divinity of kings; and symbolized his semi-sanctified state by means of the nimbus in all portraits of himself. Nimbus was later on added to the portraits of his predecessors subsequent to his orders on the subject. There are also portraits of Hindu and Muhammadan saints of the Mughal period whose figures are dignified by a plain gold halo.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Later on the symbol was taken by some other ruling dynasties in India e. g., the Adil Shahs of Bijapur.

(3) *The Stone-Egg, the Tree and the Serpent* :—The Stone-Egg symbolises the first comprehensible manifestation of the Unknowable, before creation itself. The Tree with its branches and leaves, is the symbol of the Universe itself. The Serpent symbolises reincarnation. Thus the Stone-egg, the Tree, and the Serpent together represent the birth, evolution and the process by which Nirvana is attained.

(4) *The Tirmurti*:—The three aspects or attributes of the Prakriti are symbolised both in Hinduism and Mahayana Buddhism by three male headed divinity as Broahma, Vishnu, and Shiva ; or Dharma, Buddha and Sangha. The Trimurti is also represented by the symbol of an equilateral triangle.

(5) *Equilateral Triangles*:—The cosmic element is symbolised by two equilateral triangles intersecting one another. The figure is known as the seat of Vishnu. The Equilateral triangle standing on its apex ▽ signifies expansion or evolution and it is the symbol of Broahma. The other equilateral triangle standing on its base △ signifies involution or contraction and it is one of the symbols of Shiva. The same symbols are interpreted also in a different way: The triangle standing on its base symbolises the male principle and the other standing on its apex represents the female principle. The two triangles intersecting each other make the six-petalled lotus-symbol of the mystic Divine Embrace which completed the first act of creation and known as the seat of Broahma.

(6) *The Spiral & Aum*:—The Spiral is the symbol of evolutionary force. It is represented by the coiled or gliding snake, the antelope's and ram's horn, or the conchshell of Vishnu. The mystic syllable ॐ Aum is represented also by a spiral symbol. According to the philosophy of Yoga, the cosmic spiral force known as Maha-Kundali, "the Great Coiled One" has its seat in the human body.

(7) *Shiva-Lingam*:—Shiva-linga, the creative energy of God, is represented by the symbols of Yoni and Linga in union. The Linga is generally fixed in a circular or quadrangular receptacle on a high monolithic pedestal known as Yoni. The foot is the joy of creation and the summit is the bliss of Moksha or Nirvana.

(8) *Curly Hairs* :—They are the symbolic waves of the sacred rivers which descend over Shiva's head at Kailash.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

(9) *Saligrama* :—Every Hindu worships certain formless stone called Saligrama. It symbolises the idea of the formless Broahmo. The stones (Saligrama) are of many colours and sizes and are distinguished by colours which are known as different forms of Vishnu such as White (Vasudeva), Blue (Hiranya-garbha), Red (Pradyumna), Black (Vishnu), Dark-Green (Sri Narayana), Tawny (Narasimgha), Deep-Blue (Vamana), etc. There are eighty-nine varieties each bearing a different name of Vishnu. But there are others which represent the forms of Shiva, Sakti, Surya, Ganapati. and the Planets.

(10) *Colour Symbolism* :—The three gunas or qualities of Matter have their colour symbols,—Sattva (white), Rajas (yellow or red), Tama (blue or black). In accordance with the Vishnu-dharmottaram, emotions (Rasas) are classified into eight lasting and thirty-three incidental or transitory ones. The eight lasting rasas or emotions are symbolised with certain colours and their presiding deities as follows :—

Eight Rasas or emotions	'Colours'	Presiding Deities
1. Sringara (erotic)	Dark Blue	Vishnu
2. Hasya (comic)	White	Rama
3. Rudra (furious)	Red	Indra
4. Vira (heroic)	Yellowish white	Rudra
5. Karuna (compassion)	Grey	Varuna
6. Bhayankara (terrible)	Black	Yama
7. Bhibhatsa (disgust)	Blue (indigo)	Shiva
8. Adbhuta (wonder)	Yellow	Broahma

(11) *Animal-Symbols* :—The early Vedic texts reveal a connection of the elemental deities with certain animals. For examples, 'horse' is associated with Surya and Agni ; 'bull' with Rudra or Shiva. In Buddhism, four lions represent the roaring or proclaiming the superiority of Buddhism in all directions ; 'elephant' symbolises the dream of Maya Devi or suggest the foetus in the womb. The animal-symbols in Indian Art should not be confused with the

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

heraldic significance or rajanka of particular rulers such as the bull mark of the Brahadaratta dynasty Magadha mentioned in the Mahabharata, the tiger mark of the kings of Kaveri pum-pattiham mentioned in the Pattinappalai.

(12) *Object-Symbols* :—Material objects are sometimes represented as symbols in Indian Art as follows : The wheel (chakra) is the symbol of the discuss of Vishnu or the Buddhist Dharma Chakra or the Sun. The golden disk represents the Sun. The Vajra (bolt) represents Indra. The ladder symbolizes the descent of of Buddha from 'the heaven of the Thirty-three.'

(13) *Tree-Symbols* :—The tree behind the empty altar or throne represents ordinarily Gautama the Buddha. The Bo-tree Asvatha on the architrave of the gateways symbolizes primarily an incident in the life of Buddha Sakyamuni, namely the attainment Buddhahood. The Bo-trees also symbolize the entire life and personality of Buddha or as living emblems of the Buddhist faith and the history of its expansion. Gautama Buddha's mortal predecessors namely, Krakuchchanda, Kanakamuni, and Kasyapa are represented in Indian Art by the following trees namely, Sirisa, Udumbara, and Nyagrodha.

(14) *Elephant & Scroll* :—The sitting elephant from whose mouth proceeds the creeper or floral scroll with its serpentine course symbolizes 'Pranidhana' or the firmness of the will with which the individual becoming a Bodhisattva forms the resolution, while the creeper itself represents the career of the individual as a Bodhisattva.

(15) *Vajrasana* :—The Vajrasana is a vacant seat, which symbolizes the physical presence of Buddha.

(16) *Footprints* :—The footprints in Indian sculptures concerning Buddhism, represent the stepping out of the palace by the Bodhisattva. In all Buddhist monuments carvings of Buddha's feet are held in great veneration. The Brahmanas recognise the sacred footprint at Buddha Gaya, under the name of Vishnu's feet. But there is no evidence to determine to which sect it originally belonged. General Cunningham's drawing of the footprints bears the sectarial marks on it. These marks do not correspond with any Vaishnava description of Vishnu's feet, nor with any Buddhist account of Buddha's foot mark. The wheel which the Lalita Vistara describes as a characteristic mark, is shown at a wrong place, and that on one foot of the Buddhapad.

(17) *Urna* :—The Urna or the mark in the centre of the fore-

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

head, signifies spiritual insight. The Urna in Buddhistic images is often indicated by a pearl or jewel. In Shaiva images, it is the third eye of Shiva. It is the symbol of spiritual consciousness or soul-sight as distinguished from eye-sight.

(18) *Dirghabahu or Mahabahu* (*Long Arms*) :—In primitive times the long armed man would have an advantage both in war and in the chase. So Mahabahu or long arms in Indian Art, constitute the symbol of the survival of the fittest, or an attribute of nobility.

(19) *Torana* :—A torana is an arch set upon two posts or pillars. The effect sought to be produced is that of a parapeted bridge over the river of life with hungry crocodiles (makaras) that lie in wait on its two banks. The makara or crocodile ends of the three architraves indicate the presence of the stream of water below, and the middle portions of the architraves represent the bridge or causeway. The arch bears a symbolical outline of the life of Buddha as well as the dharma-setu made by him.

(20) *Asanas & Mudras* :—The physical actions of a divinity have been symbolized in Indian Art. The attitudes of the body or the movements of the lower limbs are known as 'Asanas' and the gestures of the hands are called the 'Mudras.' They, obeying faithfully the Vedic injunctions, are not strictly in accordance with the known physiological laws, but rather by forms which transcend the limits of ordinary human anatomy. There is not an ounce of superfluous flesh anywhere, in which the bones underneath the flesh and the veins have been suppressed and the joints of the limbs are not visible as in the case of an ordinary mortal. The different mudras are associated with particular images, in a particular mood or gesture, and are used as attributes of particular gods or goddesses for the purpose of identifications. In Buddhism the mudras are but the manifestations of the Bodhicitta., The Asanas and Mudras seem to people as artificial and unnatural. But, devised as they were as suggestive of a supperhuman or a divine personality, they have been very properly conceived in a manner antagonistic to poses and gestures natural to man under the sway of human feelings and actions. The main idea underlying all the actions of Asanas and Mudras, is that it is but the body which acts, while the Self, serene, unshaken, and unattached, is a mere spectator of the drama. There are different names for different Asanas in Indian Iconography. It is said that there are eighty-four hundreds of

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

thousands of Asanas of which only thirty-two mentioned in the Gheranda Samhita, as being important, are:—Siddham (perfect) Padman (lotus), Bhadram (gentle), Muktam (free), Vajram (adamant), Swastika (prosperous) Singham (lion). Gomukha (cow-mouth), Vira(heroic), Dhanur(bow), Mrtam (corpse), Guptam(hidden), Matsyam (fish), Matsendra, Goraksa, Paschimottana, Ut-katam (hazardous), Sanghatam (dangerous), Mauryam (peacock), Kuk-kutam (cock) Kurma (tortoise), Uttana Manduka, Uttara Kurumakam, Vrksa (tree) Manduka (frog), Garuda (eagle), Vrisham (bull), Salabhu (locust), Makara (dolphin), Ushtram (camel), Bhujangam (snake), Yoga. There are twenty-fiive kinds of mudras according to Yogasastra, mentioned in the Gheranda Samhita. They are: Mahamudra, Nabho-mudra, Uddiyana, Jalandhara, Mulabandha, Mahabandha. Mahavedha, Khechari, Viparitakari, Yoni, Vajroni, Saktichalani, Tadagi, Mandavi, Sambhavi, Pancha-dharana, Abhaya, Varada, Asvini. Pasini, Kaki, Matangi Bhujangini.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

PRE-MAURYAN SCULPTURES

The excellent execution of the lithic monuments of the Maurya period proves the existence of pre-Mauryan stone sculptures or else it would not have been possible for the Indian sculptors to make such notable progress in the very period of its birth. The Mauryan sculptures are so sharp and clean and every detail is so well and cleverly expressed in the hard sandstone that it is equally evident that the Indian carvers were perfectly familiar with with the material they were using. They are far from being the first attempts. The fact that the ancient Indian carvers had chisels and tools quite equal to carving the hardest stone, and that the Indian blacksmiths were expert workers in iron and steel, explains why so late as in the fourth century B. C., Alexander demanded as a tribute from the Malavas one hundred tons of white iron (steel), which was renowned throughout the ancient world, in preference to gold.

It can be reasonably said that in India buildings in stone existed long before the Maurya period. The extracts from the Rgveda show clearly that the walled cities which excited the cupidity and envy of the Aryans of the Punjab, were mostly owned by the Aryans of other places. At a later date, Vyasa, in the Mahabharata, acknowledges that the great palace of Yudhisthira was built by a Danava namely Maya, who had been overcome by Arjuna in battle. An abstract of the work by Maya Danava is still extant. Further, the remains of Tamulian architecture existing in the present day, are more voluminous, more extensive, and more elaborate than the Aryan remains. In the grammar of Panini we find the derivations given of such words as ishtaka (bricks), stambha (pillars), bhaskara (sculptors), attalika (buildings) etc., and they cannot but imply the existence of brick and stone buildings at the time and for some time previously. Alexander found in India more than one city furnished with walls and gates.* The city of Palibothra (Pataliputra) was found by Megasthenes surrounded with a ditch which took up six acres of ground, and was thirty cubits deep; and the walls were adorned with 570 towers and 64 gates. Thus the evidences prove the fact that the Indians knew the use of stone and they used it in the construction of walls, plinths,

*Rooke's Arrian, Vol. II p. 51-53, 57.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

and bridges, long before the time of Asoka. They possessed palaces and halls of assembly of great magnificence and splendour, long anterior to Asoka's accession.

It is to be regretted that specimens of architecture older than the date of Asoka, are exceedingly rare ; but they are not altogether wanting. Archaeological research has so far revealed a few works of architecture which can be definitely assigned to the pre-Mauryan period. The well known mounds at Laurya Nandangarh in Bihar opened by Dr. Bloch, have been identified with the Smasana or the burial mounds of the Vedic period. Dr. Bloch placed them in the seventh or eighth century B. C. General Cunningham dates the stone walls of old Rajagriha or Kusagarapura the capital of Bimbisara as well as the Jarasandha-ka-Baithak and the Baibhar and Sonbhandar caves as early as 500 B. C. The walls and remains of dwellings in the old city of Rajagriha, reputed in antiquity, were forshaken during the reign of King Bimbisara, who removed the capital to New Rajagriha. Such structures, built of durable materials were certainly the rule rather than rare exception in pre-Mauryan India, and were essayed in localities where stones suitable for such masonry were ready to hand.

The sculptural progress marking Mauryan times was the outcome of a long course of evolution of which the earlier stages are representad in the following colossal statues of Yakshas, Nagas, Gandharvas, Apsaras, Asuras, and the like, which are all in their comparitive crudeness, pre-Mauryan :—

(1) *The Parkham Statue of Yaksha* :—The colossal Yaksha obtained from the village of Parkham, stands out as the grand ancestor of all our subsequent statuary. The inscription in Maurya Brahmi cut in three lines on the top of the pedestal, states that it was the work of one Gomitra, pupil of Kunika.

(2) *Two Patna Yaksha Statues* :—The inscriptions appear to have been engraved long after the statues were made. The archaic features of the statues favour an earlier date.

(3) *The Besnagar Yakshi Statue* :—The figure has a strict frontal pose. The feet are crudely executed.

(4) *The Chhargaon Naga Statue* :—The head is surmounted by seven serpent hoods and the figure is clad in a dhoti and a scarf tied round the loins. The coils are also indicated by lines cut on the back of the statue.

(5) *The Mathura seated Yakshi named Manasa Devi.*

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

(6) *The Patna female Cauri-bearer.*

(7) *The upper part of the Baroda Colossal Yaksha.*

(8) *The Besnagar Kalpa-vrksha.*

The pre-Mauryan specimens of sculptures are attempts at the representation of the early crude ideas about Yakshas, Nagas etc and their fancied appearances as a whole. Their main interest was neither philosphical nor ethical. We may, therefore, despair of finding any artistic sculpture at this early period. My clear opinion is that "Art" in Indian figure-sculptures began at the time of Bhakti Yuga. I do not find the Pre-Mauryan figure-sculptures breathe a single word about Indian Art, either for or against; and their silence is explained precisely by the fact that the idea of Bhakti Yoga had not yet presented itself to the Indian mind.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

SCULPTURAL MONUMENTS OF ASOKA'S REIGN

The sculptural monuments of Asoka's reign show two very distinct phases. The distinction lies between Crafts and Art. The crafts of his time were no doubt mature ones. All the crafts were practised eighteen of the most important including painting, being organised in guilds (seni). The term 'Kammara' was already in use as designation of the higher craftsman. Potters, carpenters, and iron-smiths occupied their own villages. The crafts of glass-making and cutting of hard stones had in previous centuries attained great perfection. Fine materials of cotton, wool, linen and silk were woven, and printing on cotton was practised. The terracottas of this period are numerous and in many cases their age can be determined not only by the internal evidence of their style, but by the associations in which they have been found. These terracottas consist of figures of Yakshas and animals, toy carts in the round, small plaques stamped with figures or miniature scenes. In the jewelleries' and lapidaries' crafts, the Asokan craftsmen attained real proficiency. Their aptitude lay, not only in the plastic treatment of form, but also in the high technical skill with which they cut and polished refractory stones or applied delicate filigree or granular designs to metal objects. The refined quality of their gold and silver work is well illustrated in pieces discovered at Taxila. Examples are furnished by the relic caskets of beryl and rock crystal from the stupas of Bhattiprolu and Piprahwa. The special characteristics of the Mauryan crafts are the fine finish and polish of the stone surface. The magnificent stone-pillars which were set up at various places for displaying Asoka's edicts prove the technical accomplishment of his craftsmen.

The Subjective Indian Art had already begun with the advent of Buddhism. The influence of the Upanishadic teachings upon Buddhism supplied the motive power for Symbolic Art in India. The Asokan relics and records of legends connected with the life of Buddha as depicted in the Jatakas show the rudimentary state of the Subjective Indian Art. The memory picture had not yet given place to direct observation of nature. Buddhism first obtained a dominant position in India under the patronage of the great Emperor Asoka. By his missionary propaganda Buddhism not only spread all over India but even far outside its boundaries and ultimately became a world-religion. The foreign races like

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

the Greeks and the Scythians who invaded India adopted this faith. The fact that Asoka Maurya declared Buddhism the official religion of of the country is proved by his pillars decorated with devices each of which was to recall Buddha. The capitals of the Pillars are adorned with the figures of four animal-symbols: elephant, bull, horse, and lion. The elephant recalls the form in which Buddha entered the womb of his mother. The Bull recalls the Vrisha-rashi when Buddha was born. The Horse represents Kanthaka on whose sacred back Gautama rode away from home into homelessness. The Lion recalls Sakya-singha, the lion among the Sakyas. In Indian Art of the Asokan period a deep under-current of the Upanishadic and the Hinayanists' influence can be felt in the entire absence of any attempt to represent the personality of the Blessed One. The numerous legends of the Jatakas never included the person of the Bodhisattva. Buddha nowhere appears, either as a heavenly person to be worshipped, or even as an ascetic. The Hinayana Buddhism was of a strictly subjective character and therefore during Asoka's reign, Indian Art was studiously subjective, reflecting the strict asceticism of the original dectrine of Buddha.

The best known remains of Indian sculptures that developed under the patronage of Asoka, comprise the following :—

(1) The monolithic columns or natural rocks at Lauriya Nandangarh, Sarnath, Sanchi, Rampurwa etc., crowned with capitals and bearing Asoka's dharma or ethical code,

(2) Stupas of brick at Sarnath, Sanchi and some portions of stupa umbrellas,

(3) The remains of a pillared hall at Patna.

(4) A group of rock-cut shrines in the Barabar hills in Behar.

(5) A small monolithic rail at Sarnath.

(6) A throne at Buddha Gaya.

(7) The Dhauli elephant in Orissa.

(8) Rampurwa copper Bolt.

(9) Some terracotta heads dug up at Sarnath and Basarh.

In all the Asokan monuments, no matter where they are set up, the same grey speckled sandstone from the querries of Chunar is always found. It is very important to notice that in addition to the identity of material there is also a similarity in style, and both of them had their chief centre in Chunar (north-eastern India). In Asokan day the Indian craftsmen held an assured and hereditary position. They, who injured the royal craftsmen, were liable to the punishment of death.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

So-called Persian Influence

The sculptures of the Asokan period are essentially Indian and they presuppose the existence of a long previous evolution of native craft. Sir John Marshall and M, Fergusson maintain that a strong Persian influence can be detected in the bell-shaped capitals, in the crowning animal figures set back to back and also in the lustrous polish with which the shafts and capitals are covered. They compare them with the Persian specimens still extant in the plains of the Murghab, at Istakhr, Nakshi-Rustam, and Persepolis. The preambles of the Edicts engraved on the Asokan shafts, accerding to Marshall and Fergusson, bear a close parallel to those of the Persian Emperors engraved on the rocks of Behistun. The great Hall of Columns in the Asokan Palace at the Kumrahar site appears to Dr. D, B, Spooner, to exhibit a close resemblance with the famous Hall of a Hundred Pillars at Persepolis, Brilliant and attractive as their conclusions are, it must be borne in mind that the evidences on which they are based are more or less untrustworthy. On the contrary it must be said that Darius had employed Indian craftsmen for building and decorating his palace at Susa and thus provided the necessary opportunity for the importation of Indian characteristics and motifs into Persia. Moreover the Asokan pillars were never intended to support any superstructure or building like those at Persepolis. They belonged to the same class as the free standing animal-standards of the Brahmanical goods Vishnu, Shiva, and Kandarpa, known respectively as Garu da-dhvaja, Vrisha-dhvaja, and Makara-dhvaja. This peculiar conception of the Asokan pillars is absolutely Indian. I am inclined in unison with Mr. Arun Sen to reject the nonsense theory that the Asokan monoliths were imitated from the Persian examples for the following reasons: Firstly, the Asokan columns are invariably made of monolithic grey sand-stones; while the Persian ones consist of various materials. Secondly the Mauryan columns have no base or appendage like those in Persia. Thirdly the lower elements of all abaci in India are lotus; nothing like it is found in Persia. Fourthly the Asokan entablature is zoophorus : in Sarnath four lions are placed in close juxtaposition. Regarding the capital from the front, we see only two lions with the backs to each other, exactly contrary to the Persian design. The Asokan lotus capital should not be regarded as a copy of the Persian bell-capital. The label 'bell-shaped' cannot be applied to the Asokan capitals at all because they represent a lotus and not a bell. It

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

is just like the reflection of the lotus on water and appears like the petals turned down upon the stalk. The lotus symbolism is more Indian than Persian.

So-called Hellenistic Influence.

Mr. V. A. Smith tells us that the composition and style of the composition are so much remote from the Persian and so akin to the Alexandrian that it is impossible to doubt that the Indian Artists imitated European rather than Iranian models. In the highly realistic modelling and anatomical treatment of the animals, Mr. Smith detects a Greek rather than a Persian tendency. It is true that Asoka mentions in his inscriptions that he had carried on negotiations with the Yavana Kings namely Antiochos of Syria, Ptolemy Philadelphos of Egypt etc. The alliance with the Seleukidae continued and in or about 256 B. C., Antiochos Theos concluded a treaty with Asoka. Monsieur Foucher merely upon these indications cleverly presents his fallacious conclusion, "It is indeed inconceivable that the Indian Sculptors of Asoka's time should have failed to learn something from the Greek Art which was so readily accessible to them". But Foucher's convincing tone, however, need not deter us from our reasonable inquiry. Mrs. Manning says that Alexander brought with him Greek and foreign artists and left them behind him. But we all know that the total period of Alexander's sojourn in India extended to only a few months the greater part of which was devoted to marching from place to place. His stay at any one spot not exceeding a few days could never afford any opportunity to the conservative Indian Sculptors to see and imitate Grecian Art. To judge the past in a better way if we take the present day when the Indians have had intimate intercourse with the Europeans for over three centuries, we shall see that they have not produced a single temple in the Saxon or any other European style. Thus we can test the validity of Mrs. Manning's conclusion and cannot accept that what has not been accomplished by the intimate intercourse of three centuries under the blessings of English rule, was effected by the Greeks two thousand years ago, simply by living as distant neighbours for eighty years or so. The Seleucids certainly had entertained political relations with the Mauryan monarchs. So it is quite possible that they had their monuments executed by the Indian Sculptors, who, through agelong tradition, were experts in the carving of stones. And that is why the Greek work of Asoka's time is unmistakably Indian in character to some extent. To conceive the reverse that the Indian Sculptors

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

learnt from the Greek examples is undoubtedly a reflex action on the Indian Crafts of the Asokan period.

So-called Egyptian Influence

Prof. W, H. Hoskings, is of opinion that in its leading forms and more obvious features, Asokan architecture strongly resembles Egyptian. But Mr. Fergusson another European critic who is decidedly against the supposition, says that Asokan architecture and bas-reliefs, bear no evidence whatever of their being of Egyptian origin.

So-called Assyrian Influenec

The relation of the Indians with the Assyrians dates from a much earlier than B.C. 250. But unfortunately sufficient materials are not at hand for a thorough comparison of their styles in Art.

Conclusion

Whatever the origin or the age of Asokan sculptures and architecture, looking to it as a whole it appears that the supposition that they are the handiwork ot foreign architects and sculptors, is entirely absurd. Its peculiar rules, symbols, features all prove a style perfectly Indian and independent of all extraneous admixture. The different forms and a few insignificant ornaments, they assumed in different provinces are all modifications or adaptations to local circumstances, of the same idea. Their explanation by means of reference to foreign influence must be dismissed as a futile attempt to expiain ignotum per ignotius,

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER NINETEEN

SCULPTURES OF THE SUNGA PERIOD

On the death of Asoka, the Maurya Empire rapidly fell to pieces. About the year 185 B. C,, the throne of Magadha passed on to the Sungas. Pushyamitra Sunga is reputed to have persecuted the Buddhists, but his successors must have been tolerant ; for an epigraph on the Barhut gateway records its erection during the supremacy of the Sungas. Sculptures of the Sunga period are best known from the railings of the Barhut Stupa, the Buddha Gaya temple, and Sanchi Stupa No.2, Figure-sculptures of this period found at Sarnath consist for the most part of broken heads, usually of moderate dimensions. Their characteristics are the types of headdress, Similar to the Sarnath examples, are a life-size head from Bhita and two fragmentary heads from Mathura. Some other fragments of similar date are reliefs with lyrical themes. Two carved perforated circular stone plaques, found at the Bhir mound site (Taxila), seem to be large earrings. These moulded plaques and modelled heads and busts represent that the Yakshas and Yakshinis played an important part in figure-sculptures of the Sunga period. The pot-bellied, ithyphallic, snouty and nude dwarfs were, no doubt, Yaksha forms. The similarity and definite relationship between the objects made of stone and clay (terracottas) may be observed throughout the Sunga Period. The terracottas of this period, most often represent Yakshinis in numerous poses of dance, or adjusting the headgear or weaving a 'Kati bandha' and 'mekhala.' Yakshas and Yakshinis are shown either dancing together or in amorous pose with the typical headdress of the Sunga period. There is a pair of centaurs, in 'alimgana' pose and enjoying a joy ride. The fish as one of the eighty auspicious symbols in Jainism, was adopted in the sculptures of the Sunga period as a symbol of fertility and vegetative prosperity.

The very interesting monument of the Sunga period is the stone column in Vidisha or Besnagar, with capital and massive abacus once crowned by a figure of Garuda. An inscription on the column records that it was set up in honour of Vasudeva by Heliodorus a Greek ambassador who came to King Kasiputra Bhagabhadra in the fourteenth year of his reign. This king may be identified with Bhadra or Bhadraka mentioned in the Puranas as one of the successors of Pushyamitra Sunga. The inscription

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

is of special value as proving the ever-increasing popularity of the Bhagavata religion about 150 B. C., even outside the border of India.

The power of the Sungas endured for a little over a century, i, e., until about the year 70 B. C. The subject-matter and treatment of the Indian sculptures and terracottas of the Sunga period contain some pre-Vedic beliefs as well as attest the continuation of the Subjective Indian Art,

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER TWENTY

BUDDHA GAYA

Buddha Gaya is accessible from Gaya by two roads, one the old Trunk road from Calcutta to Gaya and the other, the road to Sherghati. The ancient name of the place was Uruvilva and not Buddha Gaya. It took the epithets of 'Buddha' after Buddha came into existence. and 'Gaya' which belonged to a town in its close neighbourhood. In Sanskrit 'Uras' means big or high; and 'vilva', a fruit (Bel). So the word Uruvilva implies a species of large bel. The Kathbel tree is common all over the district. In accordance with the Lalita Vistara, the woods and groves of Uruvilva offered a pleasant retreat for Gautama the Bodhisattva, when he was tired of the vanities of this world and longing for a peaceful communication with his mind. Hermits generally select such retired places for their abode, and not dreadful forests away from human habitations altogether.

Date

The Buddha Gaya monuments are assigned to the earlier years of the first century B. C. This date is substantiated by inscriptions on two of the rail pillars recording that they were presented by the Queens of Indramitra and Brahmamitra. These two kings whether they were connected with the Sunga dynasty or not, appear from the script of their own coin legends to have flourished not earlier than the first century B. C. Most of the contents of the monuments are assigned to the period between B. C. 150-50. But the subjects are so diversified that their date is unquestionable. Hiuen Tsang tells us that Asoka built a small vihara to the east of the tree under whose shade Sakyamuni attained enlightenment. The remnants of the railing of Buddha Gaya erected by Asoka, are still in situ. They originally formed a quadrangle measuring 145 ft. by 108 ft. round the holy pipal tree. The railing that now stands at Buddha Gaya is however not earlier than the first century B.C., and some parts of it were introduced even as late as 300-600 A. D.

Donors' Names

The Queens namely Kurangi and Nagadeva, the wives of Indramitra and Brahmamitra respectively, appear as the founders of the Buddha Gaya monuments

Pre-Vedic Features

Portions of the coping of the old Buddha Gaya rail have been recovered. The inner faces are ornamented with long lines of animal figures including winged

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

horses, centaurs, etc. The cross-bars have lotus medallions often centred with human bust and winged animal-figures. Superhuman beings, some male, others female of a malignant nature and fierce character have been dug out by some Burmese gentlemen. 'The woman and the tree motif' is also found in one of the reliefs,

Vedic Deities

A pillar with a fine figure in relief represents Indra in the form of the Brahma Santi. Another relief represents the Sun in a chariot drawn by four horses.

Buddhistic Topics

Amidst 2500 carvings of various kinds only a few figures of female devotees, are found in a kneeling position with folded hands; but there is no image of Buddha as an object of adoration. There are reliefs illustrating the story of Assamukti and the Barhut-Jetavana-purchase scene. The figures are approaching the symbolised Bodhi tree. The number of Buddha images of a later date, come under five heads: Buddha in meditation, Buddha in ecstacy, Buddha as a teacher, Buddha as a pilgrim, and Buddha on his death-bed. Major Kittoe in 1847 recovered several figures of Maya Devi of very large sizes. In the Pancha-Pandava temple there are two of a medium size.

Pauranic Deities

There are figures of Brahmanical divinities; Prithvi Devi standing on a tortoise; Bhairava the attendant of Mahadeva; Lakshmi mounted on Garuda etc.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

BARHUT

Barhut is a village situated between Sutna and Unchera. By reason of its situation in an out of the way region, the monuments escaped the destructive zeal of the Muhammadan iconoclasts. They lay safely hidden under jungle until a century ago, when the local rustics constructed substantial houses from the spoils of the old monuments for which they cared nothing. In 1875 Cunningham recovered portions of the great Railing and the Eastern Gateway and removed them to the Indian Museum, Calcutta. The appearance of the original Barhut Stupa can well be visualized from the representations of the stupas in some of the existing panels. The Barhut sculptures are made of the red sandstone of Central India, quarried from the Vindhyas (Kaimur).

Date

The left pillar of the Eastern Gateway bears the following inscription (in Brahmi characters): "Erected with the stone carving Vatsiputra Dhanabhuti son of Gauptiputra Agaraju (Angaradyut) and grandson of Gargiputra Visvadeva—during the reign of the Sungas."

Donors

A large number of votive inscriptions engraved on the Railing record short titles of the reliefs and the names of donors. The donors' names include the laity as well as the monks and nuns forming the Buddhist confederation. The right terminus pillar was donated by Champa Devi wife of Revatimitra of Vidisa. Another lady Vasithi Devi wife of Venimitra helped for ornamenting the main railing. The inscriptions very often include the localities of the donors and show that the stupa attracted pilgrims from Vidisha, Karahakata, Nasik, Kausambhi and Pataliputra. Among the names of Bhikkus or Bhikkhunis, only Isipalita (Rishipalita) alone figures as the Navakarmika or Superintendent. From this evidence it has been concluded that the Reverend Master Rishipalita was the Navakarmika under whose guidance and supervision the Barhut monument was built.

Pre-Vedic Features

Inscribed figures of guardian Yakshas, Yakshinis and Nagarajas are found on the torana posts, with their folded hands in a standing posture. They can be recognized from the contemporary Brahmi labels appearing on the Railing. Among the tree spirits there are Chulakoka, Majjhimakoka, Mahakoka and Sirima. They are often in the act of bending the twig of a blossom known as Dohadda, Salabhanjika or Pushpa-

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

bhanjika poses. A long undulating creeper divides the Railing into innumerable compartments filled in with fabulous or composite creatures. Fabulous creatures of composite types are also exhibited on the half medallions and full medallions.

Vedic Deities

The Sun God called Mihira is represented with high heeled boots and wearing a girdle about his waist. There are four daughters of Sakra namely Asa (hope), Sradhha (veneration), Hri (modesty) and Sri (luck). Sakra figures at the heads of all the gods and goddesses of the Heaven, in celebrating a festival in honour of the hair-lock of the Bodhisattva.

Jataka Scenes

The beams of the fence and the pillars are ornamented with scenes from the Jatakas, The names of the principal persons represented and the titles of the Jatakas in Brahmi script are inscribed on separate bas-reliefs recovered.

Buddha's Life-scenes

Sculptures on the arch of each of the four gateways symbolically represent five main incidents in the life of Buddha, namely, the Nativity, the Renunciation, the Enlightenment., Preaching, and the Great Decease. It is significant that the figure of Gautama either as a Bodhisattva or as the Buddha, is totally absent. His Divine presence pervades the atmosphere. It is to be felt, not to be seen !

Historical Scenes

Among the historical scenes the most interesting are the processions of Ajatasatru and Prasenjit on their visits to Buddha ; and the Jetavana monastery with its mango-tree. temples, and the rich banker Anathapindada emptying a cart full of gold pieces to pave the surface of the garden.

Secular Scenes

Among subjects of a purely secular character. mention may be made of a two storied and balustraded residence. The immates of the house lookng down from balconies and a pair of geese and peacocks standing on the walls convey the idea of undisturbed peace prevailing in the household.

Hermitages

Barhut offers several scenes of parnasalas (leaf-huts) the abodes of Buddhist monks. They are the Jetavana (Sravasti), the Jivaka (Rajgriha), and the Nyagrodharama (Kapilavastu).

Funeral Grounds

At Barhut there are reliefs which show two kinds of funeral ground : firstly where the corpses were thrown away to undergo the natural process of decomposition or to be destroyed and eaten up by the vultures, jackals ; secondly. where the dead bodies were burnt away on funeral piles.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Conclusion

The Barhut Sculptors were mainly fond of the stories concerning Buddha's previous existences. Buddha's presence is always indicated by symbols. The Barhut artists represented the legends clustering round Buddha in such a way that everyone could make themselves conversant with them. In order to realize this aim, they had recourse to the continuous narrative method. At Barhut there is no longer round plastic art. The sculptures required the strong support of a back wall from which the figures were scarcely detached. Making love and drinking are not represented at Barhut. There is no figure entirely nude. The Art of Barhut shares subjective features of Indian Art. The figures, therefore, show rather course modelling and disregard of anatomical accuracy. The composition is very much condensed and there is no attempt to represent the three dimensions of an object. The monument of Barhut as a whole is nothing but a grand symbolical expression of the worship of a supreme personality. All the panels delineate the great festival held in honour of the relics deposited in the Stupa. There is no distinction among gods and men, kings and commoners, queens and ordinary women. Throughout prevail acts of and preparations for worship. The heaven and the earth, the high and the low, the serious and the frivolous, all meet on a common platform in acknowledging the greatness of Buddha whose symbol stands far above all as the supreme object of homage.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

SANCHI

The ancient name of Sanchi was Kakanada, but the name is known only from inscriptions and does not occur in any ancient author. Sanchi is referred to under the name of Chetiyagiri in the Mahavamsa, the Buddhist chronicle of Ceylon. The name of Sanchi or Sachi is probably the spoken form of the Sanskrit word 'Santi'. The Chinese also transcribed 'Santi' by Sa-chi; for they say that it signifies 'silence or repose'.

At the junction of the Bes and the Betwa rivers there once stood the famous and populous city of Vidisa, the capital of Eastern Malwa. In and around this city there grew up a flourishing community of Buddhists. They found on the summits of the neighbouring hills of Sanchi attractive and commanding spots which were far enough removed from the turmoil and distractions of the great city. There they built their memorials and their monasteries to attract worshippers from crowded thoroughfares. So Sanchi had no connexion with the life or acts of Buddha. The place is scarcely mentioned in Buddhist literature. The Chinese pilgrims, Fahian and Hiuan Tsang who are such a mine of information regarding other Buddhist sites, have not a word to say about Sanchi. It is recorded in the Mahavamsa that Asoka when he was heir-apparent and was journeying as Viceroy to Ujjain, halted at Vidisa and there married the daughter of a local banker, Devi by name; by whom he had two sons Ujjeniya and Mohendra and a daughter Sanghamitra. Fahian never was within some hundred of miles of the place. Hiuan Tsang left no description by which we can now identify the place and nothing to tell us for what purpose the great stupa or any of the small ones were erected. The Mahavamsa helps us a little in our own diffIculties but there is no mention of the great stupa. It may be assumed that this is one of the 84000 stupas said to have been erected by Asoka.

The power of the Sungas endured until about the year 70 B. C. The Andhras had long been dominant in the west and south of India, and it is known that they had extended their sway over Eastern Malwa. The most splendid of the Sanchi structures were erected by them. The donative inscription records the gift of one its architraves by a certain Anamda, foreman of the artisans employed by the Andhra king Sri Satakarni. At the end of the fourth century A.D.,

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Chandra Gupta II annexed Eastern and Western Malwa. An inscription on the balustrade of the Great Stupa records the gift of Amrakardava an officer under the Guptas, At Sanchi there are no Buddhist edifices of importance later than the 12th century A. D., and it is probable that Buddhism died out in Central India about that time. Of Indian sculptures of the mediaeval period, there are some specimens at Sanchi, and they all bear witness to the influence of the Tantric Cult upon Mahayana Buddhism. From the thirteenth century onwards Sanchi appears to have been left desolate and deserted. The city of Vidisa had fallen to ruins and been superseded by Bhilsa. The Muslim conqueros destroyed Bhilsa and its temples for four times, yet amid all this devastation the monuments of Sanchi were left unscathed, In 1818 the place was first visted by Colonel Taylor and afterwards by Captain E, Fell and Dr Yeld, The site quickly became a hunting ground for treasure seekers and amateur archaeologists. In 1822 Capt Johnson the Assistant Political Agent in Bhopal, opened the Great Stupa, This carelessly conducted search for supposed treasure did immense damage to the structure of three stupas and hastened the dilapidation of their enclosures, while no discovery compensated in any way for the destruction, Then in 1851, Major Alexander Cunningham and Capt F. C. Maisey together contributed to the general vitiation of the site by hasty excavations in several of the monuments and though they succeeded in recovering a most valuable series of relic caskets from the Second and Third Stupas, their discoveries scarcely compensated for the damage entailed in their operations, since the caskets themselves were subsequently lost. It was not until 1881, when still more havoc had been wrought by the neighbouring villagers, that the Government bethought itself of safe-gurding the original structures. Major Cole re-erected at the expense of the Imperial Govt, the fallen gates. No attempt, however, was made by him to preserve the other monuments which were crumbling to ruin, to exhume from their debris, the monasteries, temples and other edifices which cover the plateau around the Great Stupa. In 1912 Sir John Marshall undertook the tasks to protect the hundreds of loose sculptures and inscrptions lying on the site. Since then they have been steadily and systematically pushed forward.

Date

The Buddhist Stupas at Sanchi with the sculptured rails date from about the time of Asoka down to 300 or 400 A. D. From the inscription on the lat which stood before the South Gate, it follows that Asoka erected the Great Stupa about

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

250 B. C. The commencement of the rail followed very soon after. Another inscription states that the South Gateway was erected during the reign of King Satakarni of the Andhra dynasty about 150 B. C. The rail of the Stupa No. 2. with many inscriptions, appear to belong to a period distinctly antecedent to those of the gateways of the Great Stupa. In Stupa No 3. General Cunninghan discoverd the relics of Sariputra and Mahamogalama the two apostles who took part in the third convocation under Asoka.

Donors

The three hundred and seventy-five inscriptions cut on the railing and gates record the names of pious donors. The differences between the southern gateway and the western one, in composition, style, and technique are all due to public contributions which perhaps did not enable the supervisors to employ first class craftsmen for working out the western gateway.

Stone

Sanchi is a low hill, in which nestles the village of Sanchi. As with all the neighbouring offshoots of the Vindhyas its formation is of sandstone, wherein the Indian Sculptors found a quarry for their stone ready to hand and easily worked. The sandstone out of which the pillar is carved, came from the quarries of Chunar several miles away. The task of transporting a block of stone over forty feet in length and weighing almost as many tons over so vast a distance and of hoisting it up the steep hill side at Sanchi was one of which any engineer might well be proud.

Importance of Sanchi

The interest of Sanchi mainly resides in the gateways of the Great Stupa. The earliest of the four was the Southern, then in chronological order followed the Northern, the Eastern, and the Western. It is probable, however, that not more than three or four decades intervened between the building of the southern and western gateways. Each gateway is composed of two square pillars surmounted by capitals which in their turn support a superstructure of three architraves with volute ends, The capitals were adorned with standing dwarfs or elephants or with the forefronts of lions set back to back.

Pre-Vedic Features

Figures of Yakshas are placed as guardians on the upright posts, while at the ends of the architravs there are represented beautiful nude dryads leaning from their trees. On the summit of the gateway the wheel of the Law is flanked on either side by a guardian Yaksha holding a fly-whisk (Chauri) in his hand. The reliefs of the large ground

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

balustrade include the Yakshinis, protecting hoods, and a host of real and mythical animals, sometimes with riders, sometimes without. There are other creatures of the fancy such as horse-headed and fish-tailed men or centaurs with women on their backs. The capitals are adorned with standing dwarfs or elephants or with the fore-fronts of lions set back to back.

Vedic Tradition

The Buddhists believed in the Vedic tradition that the South was the abode of the spirits of the dead. The Sanchi Stupa had, therefore, its earliest exit on the south so that its ghostly inhabitant might pass through on its way to its final abode.

Scenes from the Jatakas

There are scenes from the Jatakas, namely, the Chhaddanta Jataka, Alambusa Jataka, Vessantara Jataka, Maha-kapi Jataka. and Syama Jataka.

Buddha's Life-Scenes

The four chief events of Buddha's life, his Birth, Enlightement, First Sermon, and Parinirvana are readily distinguish-able. His presence is indicated merely by symbols. Bimbisara with his royal cortege issuing from Raja-griha on a visit to Buddda symbolised by his empty throne. The empty throne appears walking on the face of the waters and receiving homage from Kasyapa and others. Asoka and his queen Tishyarak-shita are seen paying the ceremonial visit to the Bodhi tree. In the Mahabhinishkramana Scene we see Chhandaka and the horse Kanthaka sent back to Kapilavastu and the further journey of Buddha indicated by his footprints surmounted by the umbrella.

Buddha-Images

Four images of Buddha facing each entrance of the Great Stupa are represented in the attitude of meditation (dhyani mudra). Another depicts Budhha taming the elephant at Rajagriha. Projecting from the south side ot the Stupa No, 5 is the Buddha statue of Udayagiri stone. The Bodhisattva Maitreya statue of the Kushan period, executed in Mathura sand-stone, was discovered amid the fallen masonry of the walls of Stupa No. 12. A Buddha statue. of Mathura sandstone is seated cross legged in the dhyâni-mudra. The Bodhisattva statue, belonging to the pillar No. 35, is clad in a dhoti. The temple No. 31 contains a Buddha image seated on a lotus-throne.

Minor Antiquities

Of the minor antiquities found in the temple No. 18, the terra-cotta tablets deserve mention. They are of varying sizes, each being stamped with the Buddha figure, miniature stupas and the Buddhist creed. Among

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

miscellaneous features at Sanchi, there are figures of birds, animals, floral designs, and stirrups etc.

Vedic Deities

Sri the goddess of fortune is represented ten times. The western gateway represent Broahma and Indra entreating Buddha to make known the truth to the world.

Conclusion

On the execution of the sculptures with their multitudinous figures and elaborate details, several decades of labour must have been exhausted and many hands employed. The Subjective Sculptors of Sanchi gave eloquent expression to their spiritual ideas. The Objective Artists of Mathura who reached there in subsequent ages, led to the development of images. They portrayed the figures in free and easy postures, composed them in natural and convincing groups and gave depth and a sense of perspectiveness.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

SARNATH

One of the last exhortations of Buddha to his chief disciple Ananda was that his followers should visit the four places associated with the four main events of his life : his birth, enlightenment, first preaching and parinirvana This commandment has been faithfully kept by his followers up to the present day, and this accounts for the importance of Sarnath as one of the four great places of pilgrimage of the Buddhists. For it was here that the third event, the preaching of the first sermon by Buddha or in the more picturesque language of the sacred scriptures, the 'Turning of the wheel of the Law '(Dharma-chakra-pravartana), is believed to have taken place.

Buddha after having attained perfect enlightenment resolved, first of all, to convert the five Bhadravargiyas who had previously been the companions of his austerities. Accordingly he went to the Deer Park (Mriga-dava or Miga-daya) at the locality called Rishipatana near Benares. He then preached to them the Law which had been revealed to him. The preaching of Buddha's first sermon is believed to have taken place when he (Buddha) was thirty fiive years of age. For nearly three centuries after that date nothing is recorded regarding the history of Sarnath the Mriga-dava, though it since became a place of pilgrimage. The inscriptions throw some light on the various sects which occupied this important monastic establishment. About the beginning of the Gupta epoch the Sarvastivadins an offshoot of the orthodox Sthaviravada, appear to have been the predominant fraternity at Sarnath for they are mentioned in three short epigraphs, one incised on the topmost step of the stone stairs on the south side of the Jagat Singh Stupa and two on the monolith stone railing found under the southern chapel of the Main Shrine. On the Asokan column we find beneath the original edict a later inscription—a record of another sect, the Sammitiyas who belonged to the Hinayana or Lesser Vehicle. The Chinese pilgrims have left us valuable descriptions of the sacred places of Buddhism in India. Sarnath where Buddha set the wheel of the Law in motion, was one of the chief aims of their pilgrimage I-tsing when starting from his home in distant China, tells us, "I would sometimes direct my thoughts far away to the Deer Park." A detailed account of the convent of the Deer Park is given by the pilgrim Hiuen Tsang ; but it is no

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

easy matter to identify monuments mentioned by him. It is clear that in the six centuries which intervened between the time of his visit, and the final destruction of the famous monasteries many changes must have occurred.

More than once the main monuments of Sarnath were wilfully destroyed or fell to decay owing to indifference and neglect. But on each occasion some pious patron came forward and new buildings arose on the ruins of the old. From the circumstances of a find of sculptures made by General Cunningham it is probable that the Sarnath buildings were destroyed at the time of the great Hun invasions in the beginning of the sixth century. The purport of the inscription incised on the base of a Buddha statuette, is that in the reign of Mahipala, king of Gauda (Bangal), the brothers Sthirapala and Vasantapala restored Dharmarajika and Dharmachakra and raised a new shrine of stone relating to the eight great places (Ashtamaha-sthanasaila-gandhakutam). The Dharmachakra was the general name of the monasteries of the Deer Park and the term Dharmarajika denotes a stupa. But we are not in a position to decide which of the many monasteries and stupas were repaired by the Pala brothers. This much, however, is certain, that in A. D. 1026 (Samvat 1083) the restoration took place. and we may safely connect this restoration with the capture of Benares by Mahmud of Ghazni which occurred in 1017 A. D. It may be possible that Sarnath with its numberless images must have had special attractions for Mahmud. From the extensive prasasti (eulogy) carved on a stone slab found by Dr. Marshall in 1908, we learn that Kumaradevi, the Buddhist Queen of King Govinda Chandra of Kanyakubja or Kanauj, restored the Buddha image. Govinda Chandra's inscriptions range from A. D. 1114 to 1154. Half a century after his reign, Muslim sovereignty was triumphantly established in the ancient capitals of Delhi and Kanauj. In A. D. 1193 Jai Chand of Benares was slain in battle and a large number of temples and idols destroyed.

It was, no doubt, the conquest of India by the Muslims which brought about the final destruction and abandonmant of Sarnath. The Muslims found here ample room for a display of their iconoclastic zeal. They ruthlessly burnt and reduced the splendid establishments to irretrievable ruin. The crumbling walls of the ruined sanctuaries were gradually buried under the dust of the ages and only the three large monuments———the Dhamekh, the Chaukhandi and the ancient Maurya relic tower—still bore testimony to the

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

departed glories of the ancient Deer Park. There remained no orange robed friars to receive the weary palmer from distant lands and to show him each sacred spot hallowed by the acts of the Master. After several centuries of silence there followed the record of an imperial visit. Humayun the second Mughal Emperor visited Sarnath ; his son the Great Akbar, deemed the fact sufficiently important to have it recorded in stone. Akbar's feelings were different from those of his predecessors. Dimly perhaps he must have felt the curiosity to penetrate into the secrets of bygone ages, of which the quaint and ragged piles of Sarnath had witnessed the long- vanished life.

The true spirit of research, to bring to light the forgotten history of the ancient Deer Park, dawned long afterwards. Meanwhile, the most venerable monument of Sarnath, the ancient Maurya Stupa, fell a victim to the cupidity of one Jagat Singh, Diwan of Chait Singh, the Raja of Benares. As the new quarter of Benares, named Jagat Ganj, after the spoiler, rose into being, the ancient Dharmarajika disappeared down to its foundations. The discovery made by Jagat Singh's workmen roused a widespread interest in the ruins of Sarnath——an interest unfortunately more selfish than scientific. In 1815 Colonel C. Mackenzie explored Sarnath, but no account of his work has seen the light. Explorations of a scientific nature were inaugurated by Sir Alexander Cunningham who revealed an astonishing wealth of sculpture extending from the age of Asoka. The Dhamekh was opened. It yielded nothing but a stone slab inscribed with the Buddhist Creed, ascribed to the 6th century. Cunningham further rediscovered the stone trough found by Jagat Singh's workmen in 1794. He further found a collection of some sixty statues and bas reliefs packed rogether in a small room near the Dhamekh Stupa. The next systamatic excavations, following those of Cunningham, were carried on in 1851-1852 by Major Markham Kittoe, who was employed by the Government in designing and constructing the Queen's College of Benares. After Major Kittoe's departure, his excavations were continued first by Mr. E. Thomas and then by Mr. Fitz Edward Hall, Professor at Queen's College. In 1856 the Government acquired the site of Sarnath with the ruins from Mr. Fergusson, an indigo planter, but it was not until November 1900 that a custodian was appointed to take care of the ruins. Thus for more than a century the site of Sarnath was explored by the antiquarians and exploited by contractors.

About the beginning of the 20th century, the site of Sarnath

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

easy matter to identify monuments mentioned by him. It is clear that in the six centuries which intervened between the time of his visit. and the final destruction of the famous monasteries many changes must have occurred.

More than once the main monuments of Sarnath were wilfully destroyed or fell to decay owing to indifference and neglect. But on each occasion some pious patron came forward and new buildings arose on the ruins of the old. From the circumstances of a find of sculptures made by General Cunningham it is probable that the Sarnath buildings were destroyed at the time of the great Hun invasions in the beginning of the sixth century. The purport of the inscription incised on the base of a Buddha statuette, is that in the reign of Mahipala, king of Gauda (Bangal), the brothers Sthirapala and Vasantapala restored Dharmarajika and Dharmachakra and raised a new shrine of stone relating to the eight great places (Ashtamaha-sthanasaila-gandhakutam). The Dharmachakra was the general name of the monasteries of the Deer Park and the term Dharmarajika denotes a stupa. But we are not in a position to decide which of the many monasteries and stupas were repaired by the Pala brothers. This much, however, is certain, that in A. D. 1026 (Samvat 1083) the restoration took place. and we may safely connect this restoration with the capture of Benares by Mahmud of Ghazni which occurred in 1017 A. D. It may be possible that Sarnath with its numberless images must have had special attractions for Mahmud. From the extensive prasasti (eulogy) carved on a stone slab found by Dr. Marshall in 1908, we learn that Kumaradevi, the Buddhist Queen of King Govinda Chandra of Kanyakubja or Kanauj, restored the Buddha image. Govinda Chandra's inscriptions range from A. D. 1114 to 1154. Half a century after his reign, Muslim sovereignty was triumphantly established in the ancient capitals of Delhi and Kanauj. In A. D. 1193 Jai Chand of Benares was slain in battle and a large number of temples and idols destroyed.

It was, no doubt, the conquest of India by the Muslims which brought about the final destruction and abandonmant of Sarnath. The Muslims found here ample room for a display of their iconoclastic zeal. They ruthlessly burnt and reduced the splendid establishments to irretrievable ruin. The crumbling walls of the ruined sanctuaries were gradually buried under the dust of the ages and only the three large monuments———the Dhamekh, the Chaukhandi and the ancient Maurya relic tower—still bore testimony to the

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

departed glories of the ancient Deer Park. There remained no orange robed friars to receive the weary palmer from distant lands and to show him each sacred spot hallowed by the acts of the Master. After several centuries of silence there followed the record of an imperial visit. Humayun the second Mughal Emperor visited Sarnath ; his son the Great Akbar, deemed the fact sufficiently important to have it recorded in stone. Akbar's feelings were different from those of his predecessors. Dimly perhaps he must have felt the curiosity to penetrate into the secrets of bygone ages, of which the quaint and ragged piles of Sarnath had witnessed the long- vanished life.

The true spirit of research, to bring to light the forgotten history of the ancient Deer Park, dawned long afterwards. Meanwhile, the most venerable monument of Sarnath, the ancient Maurya Stupa, fell a victim to the cupidity of one Jagat Singh, Diwan of Chait Singh, the Raja of Benares. As the new quarter of Benares, named Jagat Ganj, after the spoiler, rose into being, the ancient Dharmarajika disappeared down to its foundations. The discovery made by Jagat Singh's workmen roused a widespread interest in the ruins of Sarnath——an interest unfortunately more selfish than scientific. In 1815 Colonel C. Mackenzie explored Sarnath, but no account of his work has seen the light. Explorations of a scientific nature were inaugurated by Sir Alexander Cunningham who revealed an astonishing wealth of sculpture extending from the age of Asoka. The Dhamekh was opened. It yielded nothing but a stone slab inscribed with the Buddhist Creed, ascribed to the 6th century. Cunningham further rediscovered the stone trough found by Jagat Singh's workmen in 1794. He further found a collection of some sixty statues and bas reliefs packed rogether in a small room near the Dhamekh Stupa. The next systamatic excavations, following those of Cunningham, were carried on in 1851-1852 by Major Markham Kittoe, who was employed by the Government in designing and constructing the Queen's College of Benares. After Major Kittoe's departure, his excavations were continued first by Mr. E. Thomas and then by Mr. Fitz Edward Hall, Professor at Queen's College. In 1856 the Government acquired the site of Sarnath with the ruins from Mr. Fergusson, an indigo planter, but it was not until November 1900 that a custodian was appointed to take care of the ruins. Thus for more than a century the site of Sarnath was explored by the antiquarians and exploited by contractors.

About the beginning of the 20th century, the site of Sarnath

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

drew the attention of Mr. F. O. Oertel then Executive Engineer of the P. W. D. at Benares. With the sanction and co-operation of the Archaeological Department, Mr. Oertel then started regular excavations. Immediately to the north of the ill-fated stupa of Jagat Singh, there was a mound which up to that moment had remained unexplored. It was against this tumulus that Mr. Oertel directed his main attack. It soon became evident that the mysterious mound contained no stupa but the remains of a large temple. At the back of this temple was found the Asoka Column and its wonderful lion capital. After Mr. Oertel's transfer to Agra, the excavation work was resumed by Dr. Marshall. Since the explorations at Sarnath have been resumed on systematic lines and with signal success the site of the ancient Deer Park attracts again an ever increasing number of visitors and lovers of Indian Art and antiquity from East and West. No doubt, the place where Buddha preached his first sermon was never quite forgotten by his followers; and pilgrims from Burma, Ceylon, and Tibet still continue to visit Sarnath. The ancient Stupas, no longer glittering with gold, but overgrown with grass and shrubs, still receive the homage of the faithful.

Sculptures of the Mauryan age.

The earliest dateable and at the same time the most important relic hitherto found at Sarnath is the inscribed pillar erected by Asoka. This magnificent monument has suffered irreparable damage, only so much of the shaft being preserved intact as was buried under-ground at the time of its destruction, though the fragments of the upper portion and the lion capital, which once surmounted it were discovered near by. The lion capital is the product of the most developed Indian Symbolic Art of which the world was cognisant in 300 B. C. In the masterful strength of the crowning lions, with their swelling veins and tense muscular development, the Asokan craftsmen had shown effort and experience of generations behind them, Another monument of the Mauryan period is the brick stupa or relic tower situated immediately south of the Main Shrine. Little of it now remains owing to the spoliation of Jagat Singh. A third monument of the same epoch is the monolith stone railing which Mr, Oertel discovered in the foundations of the southern chapel of the Main Shrine and which has been left in the position in which it was found. On account of its wonderful polish and the precision with which it is carved, features that are characteristics of Asoka's monuments, it can be assigned with practical certainly to the Maurya-period.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Monuments of the Sunga Period

To the Sunga period we may assign the railing of which several pillars and rails, partly built into later structures, were found round the Asokan column and the Main Shrine. Some of the pillars bear votive inscriptions which show that the construction of this railing was due to the co-operation of various donors. Some of the pious donors whose names are recorded on the stones in Brahmi script, were apparently, friars, sisters, and other lay-members of the Buddhist community.

Sarnath under the Guptas

It is curious that two of the railing pillars in addition to the original votive inscription of about the second century B. C., bear each a later record of the Gupta period, which indicates that under the Gupta Emperors, Sarnath must have enjoyed great prosperity, It is true that Buddhism enjoyed no longer royal patronage as in the days of Asoka or of Kanishka : but the power and influence of the Buddhist Community must still have been very considerable in those days. The great majority of the sculptures found at Sarnath, belong to the Gupta period.

Pre-Vedic Features

One of the bas-reliefs shows a stupa worshipped by an elephant and by a fabulous being—half man, half bird, in which we may recognize a kinnara. There are sculptured slabs showing a leogryph rising in the air and ridden by a warrior armed with a sword. A pair of corpulent figures, presumably Yakshas, is seen crouching side by side.

Decorative Designs

The bas-reliefs exhibit artistic lotus and vine patterns. It would be impossible in a short treatise like the present to discuss the various decorative designs of which the Sarnath excavations have yielded so rich a harvest.

Symbolic Representations

Among the abundant remains of the early periods, the figure of Buddha is never represented. Each pillar of the posts of the Andhra railing, found to the north-east of the Main Shrine, is carved on one face with various symbols such as the sacred Bodhi tree decorated with garlands, the trident which indicates the three jewels (triratna); the Dharma-chakra, and the Stupa.

Buddha's Life-Scenes

The sculptures of the Gupta period contain high slabs divided into four panels of equal size placed one over the other, which represent the four great scenes of Buddha's life, his birth, enlightenment, first sermon, and demise. There are slabs consisting of eight panels arranged in

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

two vertical rows of four each, portraying the above mentioned four great events as well as the four minor scenes of Buddha's life namely the descent from the Trayastrimsa Heaven at Sankasya (Modern Sankisa in the disirict of Farrukhabad) ; the great miracle of Sravasti ; the presentation of a bowl of honey by a monkey in the Parileyyaka forest near Kausambhi ; and the subduing of the wild elephant, Nalagiri,

The Jataka Scenes

The Jatakas were favourite subjects of the earlier sculptors. They are almost very few among the sculptures of the Gupta period found at Sarnath. On one capital we meet with some wild animal on a prostrate human figure which it seems to be in the act of devouring. The figure in the foreground would suggest the Jataka of the tigress (Vyaghri-Jataka). On the beautiful door lintel excavated by Dr. Marshall in 1908, we find four bas-reliefs relating to the Khantivad-Jataka.

The following are a few specimens of the Bodhisattva-images:—

Bodhisattva Images

(1) *Standing statue of the Bodhisattva.* The right arm is broken off. The palm is carved with a wheel and the finger-tips each with a mystic cross or swastika. The left hand is clenched into a fist resting on the left hip. The Urna mark is absent. The head is treated like the shaven head of a monk. This statue was originally protected by a stone umbrella, which was found broken into ten pieces.

(2) *Image of a Bodhisattva* : The right hand is broken off and the head is wanting. The left hand is clenched into a fist and rests on the left hip. Between the legs of the image is a dwarf or Yaksha,

(3) *Standing image of a Bodhisattva* : The head is wanting. The image was fractured at the ankles but has been re-fixed.

(4) *A colossal statue of a Bodhisattva* : The inscription states that it was erected in the third year of Kanishka's reign. The material is not the buff-coloured stone of the Chunar quarries, of which all other Sarnath sculptures are made, but it is the red sand-stone of Mathura. The inscription says that the donor of the image was Friar Bala. The head of the Bodhisattva is shaved and the style of drapery is more closely related to that of the Parkham Statue. The outlandish official titles of the Satraps Vanaspara and Kharapallana in the votive inscription of the image, indicate that the Objective Indian Artists evidently held high position under the Kushan Imperial Government.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Buddha Images

The seated Buddha image discovered by Mr. Oertel, shows the Buddha in the act of preaching his famous sermon at Sarnath. In order to indicate the sermon in the Deer Park more precisely two lying deer or antelopes were placed one on either side of the wheel symbol. The great majority of the Buddha images at Sarnath belong to the Gupta period. Their wonderful expressions of calm repose and mild serenity give a beautiful rendering of the Buddhist ideal. The halo (Prabha Mandala) encircling the head of the Master becomes lavishly ornamented with floral and foliated ornament. The hair is arranged in schematic curls turned to the right and the protuberance of the skull (Ushnisha) is nearly hemispheric in shape. The disposition of the half shut eyes indicate that the images should be assigned to the Objective School of Indian Art.

Images of the Mahayana Pantheon

At Sarnath we meet with the representations of the varied and extensive Pantheon of the Mahayana Buddhists. Avalokitesvara is represented by many an image. Sometimes he is carved in the round standing on a finely executed full-blown lotus issuing from an intricate mass of foliage. In others, he is seated in the sportive attitude (lalitasana) on a double conventional lotus. In his headdress Avalokiteswara wears a miniature effigy of his spiritual father Amitabha. He usually holds a lotus-flower (padma) in his left hand while his right is stretched out in the 'gift-bestowing' attitude. Sometimes beneath his outstretched hand, we notice the emaciated figure of the preta (Tantalized Spirit) Suchimukha who intercepts the drops of nectar flowing from the fingers of the Great Compassionate. There are images of Maitreya and Manjusri. Manjusri standing on a double conventional lotus, wears in his headdress a miniature effigy of Akshobhya.

Images of Tara

In the image of Tara (Bhrikuti) the left hand of the goddess holds a water pot on the hip and the right which is broken off was apparently stretched out in the gift-bestowing attitude (Varadamudra). Another image of Tara is attended by Marichi the goddess of Dawn and by the angry Ekajata. There is a slab with a figure of Tara seated in an easy attitude on a lotus throne. Bust of Tara in the form of Vajra Tara is carved in the round with four heads and eight arms.

Jaina Images

There are reliefs with a standing image or with a bust of Jaina Tirthamkaras. The hair is arranged in schematic curls. Sometimes an umbrella is found over the head.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Brahmanical Images

A colossal figure of Shiva is represented spearing his adversary, Tripura on his trident. There is a slab with a figure of Shiva engaged in a tandava dance. The Brahmanical trinity, the Trimurti with three faces is also represented. A seated figure of Ganesha is carved on a slab. Fragmentary sculpture of Durga holding a mace adorned with a pair of human skulls on her left shoulder has been found. Another fragmentary plaque shows Durga piercing the buffalo demon (Mahishasura) with her trisula (trident) which she holds in her right hand. A votive plaque shows a four armed figure of Vishnu wearing a high headdress, a sacred thread, and a garland. His right hands hold a lotus and a conch and the left hands, a mace and a wheel respectively.

Images of Minor Deities

The minor deities are often represented with many arms; sometimes also with many faces including those of animals. The image of Vaisravana or Jambhala the god of wealth, with his protruding eyes and tusks, in his stark nakedness exhibits his corpulent deformity wearing cobras instead of ornaments and trampling on a prostrate figure. The image of Vasudhara the goddess of plenty bears a less repulsive aspect. The image of the goddess of Dawn, Marichi or Vajra-varahi, has three faces, one of which is a boar's head, and a corresponding number of hands in which she wields various weapons. She stands in the archer's attitude on a chariot drawn by seven boars. The figure of Bhairava riding a dog and the dwarf incarnation (Vamanavatara) of Vishnu are also found.

The sculptors of Sarnath ordinarily used the excellent pale sandstone from the quarries of Chunar in the Mirzapur District.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

MATHURA

The Yuga-purana mentions the Yavanas (Greeks) at Mathura on the Jumna and subsequently treats them as masters of the country. Mathura (Mod. Muttra) formed an important outpost during the Sunga period. Monumental Stupas of the Sanchi type with toranas and railings seem to have been built here during that time. We know from the recovered miniature models of the Mathura stupa that its stone balustrade resembled in detail the railings of Barhut and Sanchi. All that now remains of the Sunga period consists of a limited number of railing pillars and cross bars. In the first century B. C., Mathura was ruled by the Kshahrata Kshatrapas of whom Maha Kshatrapa Rajula and his son Sodasa have been immortalised by the famous inscription in Kharoshti script on the Lion Capital found near Saptarshi Tila. Towards the beginning of the first century A. D., Mathura passed under the sovereignty of the Great Kushans. The Kushans patronised the Objective School of Indian Art. It is in Mathura that one can fully study the first iconographic forms. 'Mathura' is mentioned in Ptolemy's list; the word is generally rendered either as Mathura of the gods or Mathura the city of the gods. The dates of the votive inscriptions on a large number of detached images of the Bodhisattva, the Buddha, and the Jinas, found in Mathura range in the successive reigns of the Kushan Emperors. There are many other colossal images of the earlier style and without dated inscriptions. The Mathura sculptors acquired a high reputation for their considerable progress in technique. They exported many colossal statues to distant sites. The material by which these images are recognized is the spotted red sandstone found in the quarries of Fatehpur Sikri, Rupbas, and Tantpur.

Pre-Vedic Features

The subjects handling Pre-Vedic features are varied of which the following are notable :—

(1) The so-called Heracles and the Nemean lion.

(2) The so-called Bacchanalion groups : the Yaksha King Kuvera enjoying sweet portions of an exhilarating drink with his consort Hariti holding a decanter—(Madhupana-Utsava).

(3) The pot-bellied youth lying at Kukargrama represents a Naga youth with canopy of seven cobra heads.

(4) The so-called 'garland bearing Erotes.'

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

The obverse side of the railing pillars reveal Yakshinis or Vana-Devis engaged in toilet scenes holding mirror in hand, or enjoying tricks with unwary cranes or parrots, or playing with balls or bathing under mountaneous cascade or singing to the accompaniment of Sapta-tantri-vina. The pillars of Bhuteswar are conspicuous by the Yakshi figures of erotic character.

Vedic Deities

Several statues of Surya: one having Danda and pingala by his side; the other with Usha and Pratyusha; another seated in a chariot of two horses and wearing coat, and trousers, are found in the Kankali Tila. A stupa drum illustrates Indra worshipping Buddha in the Indrasaila Cave.

Specimens of Symbolic Art

The earlier sculptors of Mathura had represented Buddha by means of symbols. A railing pillar shows a Bodhi-manda under a Bodhi tree. A relief shows the worship of Buddha's alms bowl. There are other reliefs representing the worship of a stupa by devotees and flying devas carrying garlands,

Jataka Scenes

The railing pillars illustrate some Jataka scenes viz., the Jataka of the Worst Evil, the Kacchapa Jataka, the presentation of the honey by monkeys etc.

Buddha's Life Scenes

There are bas reliefs illustrating scenes from Buddha's life: birth, enlightenment, descent from the Heaven, first sermon, Nirvana etc.

Three Stages of worship

In the sculptures of Mathura we find all the three stages of worship: firstly the stage of symbol-worship, then the transitional stage and finally the stage of image-worship. The three stages represented on the 'Torana Tympanum' show how gradually image took the place of symbol. The obverse side illustrates the worship of Buddha's alms-bowl, of Bodhisattva and of Buddha. On the reverse side we notice the worship of Buddha's headdress (Ushnisha) and a Bodhisattva. They show the transitional stage of symbol-worship and image-worship side by side.

The Distributing Centre of Images

From the foregoing chapters it is now evident that image-worship originated independently at Mathura before the district became a part of the Kushan dominion. The symbolic form gradually fell in disuse and the Indian sculptors who were expert in producing the many colossal statues, had been quite fit for fashioning images when called for or when the worship of Man-God (Avatar) was recognised by the

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

religious sense of the Bhagavatas. Image-worship was not only tolerated by the Mahayana Buddhists but also became an essential part of their 'Sadhana'. But we must not forget that image-worship evolved after symbol-worship and as the symbols were still preferred and persisted, the early Objective Indian Artists applied the popular symbols to their images. Thus the appearance of the Buddha-image is characterized by the thirty-two major and eighty minor symbols or laksanas of a supernatural being. There is plenty of evidence that the Objective Indian Artists of Mathura greatly influenced Indian religions and the wide distribution of images from Mathura shows that they were regarded as the orthodox models. Mathura owed its importance as an emporium to its situation on the great trade-route which connected Pushkalavati and Taxila with Pataliputra and Bharukachchha (Broach). Moreover it is clear from numerous votive inscriptions that among the merchant class its most zealous adherents were counted. Anatha-pindada the seth of Sravasti who presented Buddha with the Jetavana park, lives on in legendary lore as the generous upasaka par excellence. Buddhism, in its gradual expansion over the continent naturally followed the great trade routes. But the great trade route was also the highway along which the rapacious invaders from the north-west pushed on towards the wealthy cities in the Gangetic plains, sacked and destroyed the temples with their images. Still with the aid of the numerous pieces of sculptures and inscriptions that have been found in Mathura, we can strongly remark that image-worship* among the Bhagavatas, the Jainas, and the Mahayanists commenced in Mathura much before the Christian era and it was in its hey day under the rule of the Kushans. In the early centuries of the Christian era Mathura was sacred to the eyes of all the adherents of the Indian religions. The abundant supply of excellent red sandstone at Rupbas and other quarries in the neighbourhood supplied all parts of India with images. Wealthy merchant-worshippers did not hesitate to undertake the cost of transporting heavy, even colossal statues for hundreds of miles. The popularity of the Mathura images was so wide-spread that they travelled beyond the borders of India. The stucco-figure from the Rawak stupa court and the seated Buddha with shaven head from Idikucari, now in Berlin, are closely related to the Mathura types. The Buddha-images at Tung Lung Shan in Shansi are very similar to the seated images

* Not only the sculptures but also terracotta images, available in hundreds each year in the Mathura district, are of great importance as documents of image-worship in and before the Kushan period.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

of Mathura in Abhayamudra posture. Within India Mathura supplied the entire Buddhist centres with the images which can easily be recognized by its red sandstone. The oldest images of Gautama the Buddha found at Sravasti, Sarnath, Gandhara, and Amaravati were all imported from Mathura during the Kushan period. But they were models to the sculptors of those places, who added local colour and traditional symbols to their new forms.

Jaina Images

The earliest known images of the Jaina Tirthamkaras are without Ushnisha or skull protuberance. They do not differ materially from the contemporary Buddha-images. Both sects used the same ornaments, the same artistic motives and the sacred Vedic symbols. Their agreement was in all probability, due to the work of artists belonging to the same Objective School. The oldest images of the Jinas found at Mathura are not detached images, but are carved in the centre of stone tablets called Ayagapata tablets of homage recovered from the Kankali Tila. Other reliefs include representations of Hari-negamesa, a minor divinity connected with the nativity of Mahavira. These tablets bear votive inscriptions, now more or less damaged, in a variety of the Brahmi character, dated from the second century B. C.

Brahmanical Images

Iconographically it is also important to remember that the first forms of most of the Brahmanical gods and goddesses originated at Mathura. Here one can see Ekamukhi Shiva Linga, Shiva and Parvati in 'dampatibhava,' Ardha-narisvara form, Simha-vahini Durga, four armed Vishnu, Gaja Lakshmi, Broahma, four armed Mahishasuramardini, Vasudhara, Surya with Usha and Pratyusha, etc.

Bhagavata Images

There are reliefs illustrating Vasudeva carrying Krishna to Gokula across the Jumna.

Hermit-Figures

There are railing pillars representing the ascetics namely Rishya-sringa, Kapila, Bharadvaja and Jatila etc

Bodhisattva and Buddha Images

No new effort or knowledge was required by the Indian Artists to produce the Buddha-image. They easily transformed the many ascetic figures into Buddha figures, i. e., strictly in accordance with the iconographic traditions. Practically every element essential to the iconography of Buddha and Bodhisattva figures appears to be known long before they were represented. It may be recalled here that Gautama before his enlightenment is called Bodhisattva and after the attainment of 'Knowledge,' the Buddha. In sculptures the Bodhisattva is

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

usually represented with ornaments in a princely form, and the Buddha in monk's dress. But at the very beginning the Mathura sculptors drew no distinction between them. There are examples of Bodhisattva-images represented without any ornamentation and with a bare right side distinguished only by inscriptions.

Three Types of Mathura Buddhas

Now, if we study carefully all the Buddha images at Mathura, we shall see that there are two distinct types and another of mixed type. In my opinion all the forms of Buddha in different parts of India can be tabulated with reference to the prototypes in Mathura :—

Two Distinct Types of Mathura Buddhas

Type—(A) Principal Features	Type—(B) Principal Features
1. The head is shaven	1. Luxuriant hair twisted into a large knot upon the crown of the head. Later on the head was covered with snail like curls. In accordance with the Nidhana-katha, when the Bodhisattva shore his locks, his hair, reduced to two inches, curled from the right and lay close to his head as long as he lived.
2. Without Ushnisha or skull protuberance.	2. Head and Ushnisha are cov- with spiral locks.
3. The drapery leaves the right shoulder bare	3. The drapery covers both the shoulders.
4. The drapery conceals the the body and the folds are loosely and naturalistically treated.	4. The drapery moulds the flesh very closely and is arranged in schematic folds (wet drapery).
5. The seat is always a lion throne (Simhasana). The lions flanking the figure	5. The seat is either the lotus throne (Padmasana) or the Vajrasana. In the case of

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

appear either with their mouths shut or with jaws wide open. In the case of standing figures there is often a seated lion between the feet.	standing figures there is a bundle of lotus buds between the legs.
6. The nimbus is plain or scalloped at the edge in low relief.	6. The nimbus is ornamented with a narrow foliated band, close to and parallel to the edge.
7. The feet protruding from the drapery lie flat and uncovered upto the thighs. They are Cross-legged when seated.	7. The drapery covers the entire body up to the ankles, leaving only feet free. In seated figures, the feet are also covered with the drapery.
8. The right hand is raised in Abhaya mudra, the left is often clenched, and rests on the thigh in seated figures. In standing figures the left hand supports the folds of the drapery.	8. When seated, he is represented in the Bhumisparsa mudra. When standing the left-hand lifts up the hem of the drapery.
9. Clean-shaven face.	9. Broad faced with moustache and in some cases especially in terracotas with beard as well.
10. Plain ear.	10. With elongated lobes of the ear.

Terracottas

Not only the sculptures but also terracottas, found in the Mathura district in abundance, are of great importance as documents of the evidence that Mathura served as a distributing centre of images throughout India. The craft of working in terracotta (baked clay) has been widely practised in India from very early times. Terracottas are available in hundreds each year and of which the variety is as startling as the numbers. They may be periodically grouped, but the chronological sequence in their dating is the result of a study of style. The similarity and definite relationship between the terracottas and stone sculptures may be observed throughout the history of Indian

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Art, Archaic tutelary female Yakshinis, Vedic deities, Buddha and Bodhisattva-images, Jina images and symbols, secular scenes and decorative panels, all are in baked clay as well in stone.

Miscellaneous Images and scenes.

Besides the images of Indian gods and goddesses and human incarnations of God (Avatar), the Mathura Objective Artists represented some historical persons such as Vema Kadphises, Kanishka, and other Kushan princes, ladies, noblemen as well as the local residents of Mathura wearing turbans and mukuta form of headdress. There are panels depicting the lovely toilet scene of Buddha's half brother Nanda and his wife Sundari, whose romance has been immortalised by the poet Asvaghosa,

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

AMARAVATI

Modern Amaravati represents the ancient city called the Dhanykataka or Dharanikota in the Guntur District, Madras. It was the capital of the Andhra Kings by the end of the first century A, D. In the districts adjoining the deltas of the Krishna and Godaveri rivers, Buddhism had a very strong hold in early times. This is abundantly evidenced by the numbers of their remains in the area. A list of the mounds called "Dibbas" indicates about three hundred in the Kistna district alone. Most of the dibbas, as excavation has shown, were stupas. The stupas with their multitude of marble sculptures in reliefs had lain buried under the dust of ages. A petty raja selected a neighbouring spot on the river Kistna for a new residence, and he found in the Buddhist shrines a welcome means of supplying himself, at small cost, with excellent building material. The entire Amaravati Stupa with its exquisitely sculptured pillars and panels were demolished and used as quarries not by the rustic natives only but by the P. W. D. Engineers the record of whose vandalism is more deplorable. The ancient Stupa of Amaravati was so thoroughly razed to the ground that the modern excavators were not even able to reconstruct the original ground plan with absolute certainty. The place where it had stood is merely indicated by a circular pit of about 75 yds in diameter. The Stupa at Jaggayyapeta or Betavolu, thirty miles north-west from Amaravati, had been plundered of its rail, and of much of the marble casing of its basement, the dome had been destroyed, and relic casket dug out before it was surveyed in 1882. Remains of other stupas testify to the predominance of Buddhism in this province and their prosperity for several centuries before and after the Christian era.

The Amaravati sculptures including some fragmentary representations and a complete miniature of the Great Stupa give us the best picture now available of what it looked like. The miniature stupa in the relief is surrounded by profusely decorated railing which follows the contour of the central sanctuary, and accordingly represents a balustrade of circular plan. Facing the four projections of the stupa are the entrances to the procession path, which are formed by the balustrade bending outwards on either side. The great balustrade consists of posts or pillars, which are connected by cross-bars and covered by a continuous

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

coping. It is remarkable that the Stupa of Amaravati knew nothing of the torana and thus preserved a fairly primitive character.

Date

The Stupa of Amaravati is said to have been erected over a relic of Gautama the Buddha. The date of its foundation is not known, but inscriptions on the oldest sculptures found, which belong to the period of the early Andhra Kings, are in Brahmi characters of about 200 B. C. According to Dr Burgess the Amaravati stupas at Dharanikot (Dhanykataka) were originally constructed early in the second century B. C., and Nagarjuna was closely associated with the Buddhist establishment of this place. In accordance with the Tibetan tradition, Nagarjuna passed his last days at Sriparvata (Srisailam) near Dhanykataka. The Manjusrimulakalpa also takes notice of this mountain as a suitable place for Buddhistic practices, and one of the inscriptions recently found, records that some devotees constructed a number of caityas and viharas, and dug wells for pilgrims visiting the sacred place from Gandhara, Cina, Aparanta, Vanga, Vanavasi, Tambapannidipa, etc. From these facts it may be concluded that about the beginning of the Christian era there was on the bank of the Krishna in the Guntur District a very important centre of the Mahasanghikas. A few fragments of the ancient sculptures still survive and are obviously related to the type of Barhut. Sculptures belonging to a second series are connected in certain respects with Mathura and Gandhara style. The railings themselves resemble in their general appearance those at Sanchi and Buddha Gaya. The inscriptions bearing the names of the three Andhara princes, namely, Sri Pulumavi, Sri Sivamaka-Sata, and Sri Yajna and the reported asssociation of Nagarjuna's name suggest that majority of the sculptures on the railing were executed during the Andhra supremacy. A further set of sculptures was added during the reigns of the later Andhra Kings.

Pre-vedic Features

There are panels representing the descent of the future Buddha supported by *the Yakshas* in the midst of a swarming crowd of jubilant gods. Among the three great objects of Buddhist worship, the Dagaba with its rail is accompanied by *the five-headed Naga.*

Jataka Scenes

The illustrative reliefs of Amaravati are chiefly concerned with the Buddha legends. They are portrayed with great vividness and elaboration. One recognizes many a familiar episode in these panels which have

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

survived in a sadly mutilated condition. On the inner side of the railing, both the coping and many of the circular medallions are scenes illustrating the Jatakas.

Symbolic Scenes

The spaces left vacant between the curves of the waving scroll are filled with various symbols such as a Bodhi tree, Dharma-chakra, a stupa, etc. A few archaic sculptures of the rail represent the veneration of relics, the Triratna, but without the figure of Buddha. In his birth scenes, Buddha is carried through the heavens as a white elephant. His 'Nirvana' is represented by the stupa-symbol. The symbolic figures suggest that Amaravati must have possessed a more ancient Buddhist monument in the second century B. C. The symbolic form gradually fell into disuse as the objective sentiment was preferred and persisted.

Buddha Images

The objective sentiment of the Mahayanists regarding the representation of Buddha in bodily form affected all the Budhist centres more or less simultaneously. Mahayanism in all probability germinated in the south, where the offshoots of the Mahasanghikas had their centres of activities but the places where it appeard more developed were Nalanda and Mathura and subsequently Gandhara. At Amaravati, there are specimens of Buddha-images in Mathura style. A circular frame shows the Buddha's encounter with the mad elephant egged on by his wicked cousin Devadatta to destroy him. The elephant has also been pictured when devoutly kneeling before the Master. A stele presents the four principal events of Buddha's life. Another lower half-stele illustrates the edifying legend of the conversion of Buddha's half brother Nanda carrying the begging bowl of his inexorable brother.

Miscellaneous Scenes

There are many other scenes at Amaravati which may be grouped as miscellaneous. A plinth exhibits a frieze of animals and boys, in comic or ludicrous attitudes. On the coping of the outer side of the great railing is an undulating garland with Indian garland bearers. There are reliefs relating the sophisticated doings of a mundane court society. The coquettish conduct of frivolous ladies, the bored expression of young gentlemen are everywhere masterfully rendered.

So-called Roman Influence

The rich finds of Roman coins in Southern India made some critics think of the realistic touch in the reliefs of Amaravati as due to the influence of the Romans. But we all know that fantastic prices were paid

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

in Rome for the gorgeous silks, brocades, cloth of gold, and fine muslins for which the weavers of India were famous. Pliny condemned the extravagance which yearly drained the Roman Empire of a hundred million sesterces i. e., about one million sterling, paid for these luxuries. It would be absolutely wrong to conclude that the merchantile relations which helped to fill the royal treasuries of India with Roman gold and to crowd the bazars of Indian commercial cities with Roman traders, had any influence upon Indian religion or the evolution of Indian Art. It will be equally absurd to think that the Roman Art's influence had come to Southern India with the merchants. It is true that the Marcus column reminds us of the art of Sanchi. But we must not forget that the Marcus column was completed in A. D. 193, while Sanchi monument preceded it by fully two centuries. This fact rather proves on the contrary that the Romans had borrowed plastic style from India. An inscription of Nagarjunikonda refers to a locality, Kantakasola, which must be identical with the emporium "Kantakassula" mentioned by Ptolemy.

Conclusion

The Objective Sculptors of Amaravati represented Buddha as a divine being receiving worship. Stylistical and iconographical reasons warrant that these sculptures were of a more recent date. Their style was a logical development of the earlier style of Barhut and Sanchi. The old conceptions of the Subjective School were too powerful and they continued to exercise sway for a long time. But they retired step by step as the Objective School grew more and more popular. The inner law of such a development in expression can no longer be denied to day. The most important result in subject matter appeared in the representation of Buddha as, seated in Yogi posture, meditating or preaching. I can safely infer that the Objective Artists of Mathura supplied the Amaravati Artists with the ideal and realistic model of their divinity. The Objective representation of Buddha originated in Mathura and affected all the Buddhist Centres more or less simultaneously. The sculptures of both the places namely Amaravati and Gandhara betray marked evidence of Mathura's influence and it seems that they are more or less contemporary. The Buddha standing on lotus pedestal which originated in Mathura appears both at Amaravati and Gandhara. The priestly type of Buddha with the nimbus—a veritable mark of Mathura origin—regularly appears among the sculptures of both Amaravati and Gandhara. The early sculptures of both the places

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

exhibit the early worship of symbols side by side with the worship of image-Buddha seated in the conventional Yogi attitude. Similarity between Amaravati and Gandhara sculptures is also noticed in the frieze of animals and boys, often in comic or ludicrous attitudes. Instances are there of the decorated transformation of the motif of 'garland bearers' of Mathura origin. At Mathura, Sarnath, and Amaravati we find the smooth roll carried by men, while in Gandhara the same imbricated roll is carried by boys. There are critics who, on finding such similar motifs and types, consider the Amaravati School as the offshoot of the Gandhara School. But after considering the geographical and political separation of the Kushan and Andhra empires, it can be utmost presumed that the Amaravati sculptors could have direct knowledge of the motifs and types of Mathura rather than that of Gandhara which is far away situated. In my opinion the Amaravati motifs and reliefs had their origin in some legends which were then common throughout India. But leaving out these petty resemblances, the conception of Buddha-image was not at all due to the influence of each other. The credit goes to the Mahayanists. The Mahayana teaching originated in the south (Daksinapatha), passed to the eastern countries (Vartanyam) and lastly prospered in the north. Nagarjuna, whose birth place was in Vidarbha (Berar), also dwelt in the South, passing his last days in Sriparvata (Mod. Srisailam). Aryadeva likewise came from Southern India, as did also Naga, another disciple of Nagarjuna. So it appears that the South may claim credit for being not only the birth place of Mahayanism itself, but also of the noted figures, who were instrumental in making Mahayanism. And it seems at least almost impossible to escape the conviction that Mahayanism originated in the South just before the Kushan's arrival in India, developed and established its chief centre in Nalanda and gradually pushed its way towards Mathura to blossom forth in its full glory under the care of the great Nagarjuna and the royal patronage of Kanishka.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

GANDHARA

Gandhara, a local name anciently applied to the country between the Kunar river and the Indus, comprising the modern Bajaur, Swat, Buner, the Yusufzai country, and the country south of the Kabul river about Peshawar. It is a vast gently undulating plain, bristling in places with rugged hills, and three parts encircled by a belt of mountains. On the south-east is the great gate of India and to the west is the Khyber pass formerly guarded by the towns of Purushapura (Peshawar), Pushkalavati (Charsadda), Calatura. and Udabhanda (Mod. Und). The districts of Hazara and Rawalpindi, together with Taxila (ancient Takshasila) were also included in Gandhara. The Gandhara monasteries embrace the numerous remains of the monasteries of Jamalgarhi, Takhti-Bahi, Shahdehri, Sanghao, Natthu, Loriyan Tangai and other localitics in the region of the Swat (the Vedic Suvastu). The richest sites as yet explored are those crowded together in the Yusufzai country to the north and north- east of Peshawar and many more beyond the British frontier.

Political History.

Gandhara was a Persian province from 530 to 330 B. C. The country of the Gandarioi or Gandarae or Gandaritis is mentioned by Herodotos, Hekataios, Ptolemy, and Strabo. The Greek historian Herodotus records that the Gandarioi supplied their contingent to the army of the Persian Emperor Xerxes in his invasion of Greece. The people of Gandhara are mentioned among the subject nations in the Behistun inscription of Darius. Darius I had conquered Gandhara. Sindh and a part of the Punjab. The Gandarioi furnished him too with their contingent for his invasion of Greece. The Persian rule was supplanted by the Greek as a result of the conquest of Alexander the Great. When Alexander entered the Peshawar Valley, Gandhra was under the rule of a raja named by the Greeks, 'Astes' whose capital was Pushkalavati (Mod. Charsadda). At the same time the reigning king of Taxila was Ambhi (Omphis). After Alexander's death, his Indian dominions fell eventually to Seleukos Nicator. But the treaty concluded about 305 B. C., between Seleukos Nikator and Chandragupta Maurya, brought Gandhara within the Indian Empire. Proof that Gandhara formed part of the Maurya dominion is afforded by the Rock Edicts of Asoka still preserved at Shahbazgarhi, some ten miles to the east of Mardan. About 205 B. C., Diodotus I a Greek adventurer made himself

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

independent in Bactria. With the decay of the sovereign power of the Asokan successors the outlying frontier provinces including Gandhara gradually became absorbed in the Greek kingdom of Bactria. The family of Demetrius was driven out of its possessions in Bactria, the Kabul Valley and Gandhara by Eucratides. Princes of the House of Eukratides continued to rule about 135 B. C., when they, in turn, were expelled from Bactria by the Sakas, a Scythian tribe from Central Asia. But the Greeks continued to rule in Gandhara until they were overthrown by the Kushans. The Kushans held Gandhara until the final extinction of their power by the White Huns or the Epthalites who overran Northern India in the fifth century A. D.

Religious History

The expansion of Buddhism over Gandhara was chiefly due to the support of the Emperor Asoka. Gandhara, the border province in the farthest north-west, is mentioned in the Mahavamsa, among the countries that were converted to the Good Law. It was from Gandhara that Buddhism started on its triumphal progress across central Asia to the West and Far East. The Singhalese chronicle, the Mahavamsa, also records the name of the Budnhist apostle Madhyantika who sent by Asoka, converted the people of Gandhara and Kashmir, Buddhism which was in vogue among the Sthaviras in the time of Asoka, was the Hinayana form. The Kashmira-Gandhara Sthaviras at first kept to their original doctrines, but later were influenced by the Mahasanghikas were the forerunners of Mahayana Buddhism. In the course of fifty years after the death of Asoka his descendants lost their power over Gandhara, About first century A, D,, the Kushans took possession of Gandhara. Kanishka the celebrated Kushan, embraced Mahayana Buddhism and became one of its greatest champions. He held the third convocation at which Nagarjuna was apparently the presiding genius. Although Buddha in all probability never travelled west of the present United Procinces, we find that numerous sites in Gandhara were definitely associated with and owed their fame to events connected with Buddha in his last of previous existences. The sanctity of Kanishka's great stupa is reputed to enshrine relics of Buddha and by the Patrachaitya wherein was preserved his patra or begging bowl. After the death of Vasudeva, the Kushan power declined; it survived in Gandhara until the fifth century A. D. The Chinese Buddhist pilgrim, Fah Hian visited Gandhara about 400 A. D. From his description of the stupa of the Eye Gift adorned with silver and gold and his statement that some

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

seven hundred priests still served the Patrachaitya, it is clear that Buddhism was then relatively vigorous and flourishing in Gandhara. But when in 520 A. D., Song-Yun another Chinese pilgrim, reached Gandhara, he recorded the destruction of the country by the Ye-tha or White Huns. The Buddhists were persecuted bv the Huns under Toramana and his son Mihiragula. Song-yun speaks of the Ye-tha King Mihiragula whom he met in camp, as cruel and vindictive, practising the most barbarous atrocities, worshipping demons and opposed to the law of Buddha. Song-Yun was the last to see the glories of the Buddhist shrines of Gandhara. Hiuen Tsang visited the country in 630 A D., when it had become a dependency of Kapisa (Mod. Kohistan) and that most of the monasteries were ruined and desolate. Nevertheless, Buddhism lingered on in Gandhara until the Muhammadan invasion (1021 A. D.) swept away the last traces of Indian Culture and Religion. But by that time the greater part of the monuments were hidden and filled with wild shrubs and solitary to the last degree.

Date

Since the early nineteenth century, when the Indian borderland was opened up to scientific exploration, the monastic ruins of ancient Gandhara have yielded an incredibly large quantity of sculptures which have since been distributed among several Museums. But unhappily among the many thousands of sculptures we possess, there is not one which bears a date in any known era. Inscribed sculptures are few, and fewer still are those that give a date. The Buddha of Loriyan Tangai is dated in the year 318 and the so-called Hashtangar pedestal bears the date 384. But since it is not certain which era has been used, these inscriptions do not offer any definite clue. The inscription in one of the stupa at Manikyala has been read and is dated in the eighteenth year of Kanishka. Another recent acquisition No. 1944 is dated in the year 89 seems, on palaeographic grounds, to be referable to the Kanishka era. But the date of Kanishka is not yet a fact established beyond dispute, datings have ranged from 58 B. C., to the third century A. D. When the dated inscr iptions do not help the Archaeologists they look for considerations of style to determine with any approach to certainty the chronological sequence to the sculptures. So the European Archaeologists accepted as a general maxim that the earlier ones are realistic and the most idealised the latest ; but the practical application of their principal presented many difficulties. The majority of the sculptures are highly complex and pertake of the characteristcs of or at least show elements appertaining to both the new and the older periods. For

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

instance when some Archaeologists attempted to prove that the Gandhara sculptures developed in the time of Kanishka, simply relying on the casket from the stupa at Shahji-ki dheri, the difficulties arose in assigning the Shahji-ki-dheri casket to the time of Kanishka. The Kushan King represented on the casket in relief in a band below the Buddha figure, is without a beard, whereas Kanishka like his predecessors had this feature uniformly on his coins. As representations of beardless Kushan Kings appear on coins from the time of Huvishka onwards, the casket should be assigned to this period. The lotus seat or pedestal, the consideration of haloe round the Buddha figure and the non-realistic execution seem to indicate the later Kushan period. Thus the compositions are frequently so complex that certainty can rarely be reached. Then it struck to some Archaeologists that the complicated problem could be solved with the aid of the coins found in the Buddhistic monasteries of Gandhara. The custom of burying a few coins as votive offerings was evidently very common. At Taxila (Mohra) Cunningham discovered twelve coins of Azes I. At Bala Hisar, Marshall discovered a number of coins, the earliest of which exhibited the inscription of Soter Megas. At Mir Zigurat, Marshall found a coin of Menander and in the neighbourhood he discovered coins of Azes, Hermaeus, Basileus Megas, Vima Kadphises, and Kanishka. At Ghaz Dheri a coin of Zeionises was found. Dr. D. B. Spooner who investigated the ruins of Shahri Bahlol, brought to light 67 copper coins, of which two belonged to the Kushan Kings and one bore the inscription of Soter Megas. Stein's excavations discovered coins of Vasudeva and of later Indo-Scythian rulers and one coin of Azes. In another stupa a reliquary made of Gandhara stone was found containing among other objects four coins of Maues, Apollodotus and Spalahores or Spalyris who died some twenty years before the reign of Azes. In the chamber of relics of of stupa S. 8 four coins of Maues and Azes I were discovered. Charles Masson found in Bimaran Stupa II, a steatite box containing four coins of Azes I. In Ahin Posh stupa at Jalalabad, one coin of Kanishka and another of Kadphises II were found. Now we may argue that the construction of Gandhara stupas may be traced to the Greek period. But the ruler who can be connected with the oldest sculptural remains of Gandhara, we continually come across the name of Azes I. Prof. Wilson's and L. Bachhofer's remarks that no coin of a Greek prince of Bactria has ever been met with any stupa, are not even true to the facts. But the local coins that are found therein mostly belong to dynasties subsequent

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

to the destruction of the Bactrain kingdom. Moreover a stupa is not older than the coins buried within it. On the contrary it may be younger by one or two centuries. At Manikyala a coin of Yasovarman of Kanauj was found. Between Azes I and Yasovarman of Kanauj, therefore must be ranged the whole of the great group of Gandhara sculptures. It is tempting to ascribe the origin of Gandhara sculptures to Greek princes. But the evidence supplied by the coins that have come to light points that the famous Gandhara sculptures belong not to the period of the Greek occupation but to the more settled and prosperous rule of the powerful Scythian monarchs who succeeded them. We have not yet found a single piece of sculpture that can be said to have been executed by the Greek Kings of Bactria or during their supremacy. It is, therefore, certain that the beginning of Gandhara sculptures occurred between the passing of Greek rule and the coming of the Kushans. that is under the Saka Pahlavas who wrested north-western India from its Greek rulers and ousted them from Bactria. The Greek Kingdom of Bactria is supposed to have been continued for a century and a half quite sufficient for the introduction of architecture and sculptures. It is suggested by some European writers that if they (Greeks) were capable of producing coins, there might also have been others among them who were architects or builders as well as sculptors. But it is as rash and absurd as to conclude that that as Bactria proper and Gandhara had long been inhabited by the White Huns and fanatical Moslems, they destroyed all representations of the human form and especially those made the the Greeks only. On the other hand this is undeniable fact that not a single Gandhara sculpture can be dated before the time of the powerful Scythian monarchs. But then it should not be inferred that either the Greeks never really possessed the Gandhara valley where so many sculptures have been found or their occupation was purely military and commercial matter. In order to understand the situation of the Greeks in Gandhara properly, it is pertinent here to give a few pages to the Greek conquest of Gandhara in detail to some extent.

Greek Conquest of Gandhara

Alexander's success was far more evanescent than that of Darius. Leaving out of account the Paropanisadae, almost everything he did in India was wiped off the map within seven years of his death. The only traces of his rule were two or three of the cities he had founded. The last Macedonian Satrap namely Peithon quitted Gandhara in

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

316 B. C., and the whole of his Indian dominions fell into the hands of Chandragupta Maurya. In the beginning of the third century B. C., Bactria began to break loose from the Seleucid Empire. Diodotus, starap of Bactria-Sogdiana, gradually began to outgrow Seleucid authority. His son (by his first wife) Diodotus II took the royal title and allied himself with Tiridates of Parthia, the enemy of the Seleucids. The widow queen married her daughter to Euthydemus presumably one of Diodotus' satraps. Euthydemus killed Diodotus II and took the crown of Bactria. In India the Maurya Empire proper had pivoted upon the three great cities namely Pataliputra the capital, Taxila on the north-west, and Ujjain on the south. Asoka had converted the whole of Gandhara and it became to the Buddhists a second Holy land where rose three of the four great stupas at Manikyala, Girarai and Pushkalavati (Charsadda), which recorded Buddha's charity with his own body in earlier incarnations. Under Asoka, Buddhism had become the official religion of the empire. A silent struggle was, therefore, in progress between the Brahmans and the Buddhists. After Asoka's death when the Mauryan Empire began to suffer gradual decline, a Brahman namely Pushyamitra Sunga murdered the last Maurya and seized the crown. Pushyamitra Sunga was a fanatical devotee of the Brahmanical Hinduism which he, therefore, naturally desired to see restored as the religion of his realm. He went to Sagala and massacred the Buddhists, offering a gold piece for the head of each Arhat. The matter at once became of concern to every Buddhist in India, who had no desire to be under the rule of such a fanatical Brahman ruler. This situation in India gave Demetrius (eldest son of Euthedemus) an opportunity for propaganda among the Madras who had been Buddhists. Demetrius had to make arrangements for the government of Bactria during his absence. He left his eldest son Euthedemus II and took to India with him his second son Demetrius II and also his general Menander. Anyhow he took Gandhara, crossed the Indus, and occupied Taxila. Menander saved the Buddhists from the oppression of the Sunga King. Demetrius received the title of Dharmamita (Friend or Defender or Protector of the Faith). Later on Apollodotus and Menander appeared on their coins as Soter (= the saviour), because they also saved the Buddhists from the tyranny of Pushyamitra Sunga. Within a few years Demetrius became lord of a realm which in mere size probably attributed to Chandragupta Maurya. With Menander at Pataliputra, Apollodotus at Ujjain, and himself at

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Taxila, Demetrius held the three cardinal centres of the empire. But when Eucratides arrived, Demetrius ordered Menander to abandon Pataliputra and all the Middle Country south of Mathura and he himself hurried to Bactria to meet Eucratides. Apollodotus must have previously returned to the north. Eucratides, after crossing the Hindu Kush, took Kapisa from Agathocles, and annexed Gandhara. But his further advance eastward was checked by Menander, who recovered Gandhara or most of it. The deaths of Demetrius and Apollodotus and the return of Eucratides to Bactria left Menander master of the position in India. He legitimised his rule by marrying Demetrius' daughter Agathocleia. His empire extended from Mathura in the east to Barygaza (Broach) in the west. Gandhara was part of his realm and which he ruled through a sub-king namely Antimachus II Nikephoros who fought for him against Eucratides. Menander died, leaving his widow as regent for his son Strato. His vast and loosely hung realm the maintenance of which had obviously depended upon his own personality, began to break up. Heliocles the son of Eucratides annexed Gandhara and Taxila and drove Strato back. Heliocles was succeeded by Antialcidas in the rule of his Indian provinces between Hindu Kush and the Jhelum. Antialcidas was the last king to rule all the three kingdoms west of the Jhelum namely, Taxila, Gandhara, and Paropanisadae. On his death his realm was divided or broken up, into its component parts. He was succeeded by five kings one after another to rule over Gandhara. They were Diomedes, Epander, Philoxenus, Peucloaos and Artimidorus. Artimidorus' immediate successor was Maues. Greek rule everywhere was overthrown, not by any action by the Indians, but by a new and more numerous body of foreign invaders.

The Greek conquest of Northern India is thus ascribed to to three men, namely, Demetrius, Apollodotus, and Menander. Now, the attempt must be made to show how it happened that not a too numerous body of Greeks came into possession of a large part of Northern India and were apparently able to rule for a period longer than Alexander's successors had been able to do so. The reason is this that Demetrius was well informed about Buddhist feeling in Gandhara before he reached Taxila. He, therefore, followed a plan which neither Darius nor Alexander had known enough about India even to dream of. His policy was not to be a Greek King of his Buddhist subjects, but a Buddhist king. He realised that mere Greek conquest was useless unless they could find a

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

way of living with the conquered afterwards. With this idea he established in India, not a Greek but an Indian Empire. Buddhism to him must have been far the most important religion, primarily for the political reasons already considered. He as well as his successors had always to depened a good deal on Buddhist support. The Buddhists too, saw in Demetrius something resembling the ideal king of their own tradition. And, therefore when Demetrius besieged Eucratides, he was really able to employ a large force of 60,000 Indian troops. The stability of the Greek realm largely depended on the friendly co-operation of the Buddhists. Had the terms not been good, Greek rule could never have lasted as it did. The friendly relationship was more strengthened by the Greeks' conversions to Buddhism. The Greeks not only adopted Buddhism but also used the Indian forms of their names such as Timitra (for Demetrius). Bhagadatta (Apollodotus), Milinda (Menander), Denipa (Deinippos). Sapha (Sophe) and so on. In the caves at Nasik, Junnar and Karli, are a number of inscriptions recording religious gifts by Buddhist donors of which nine are material here. In these nine, seven of the donors call themselves Yavanas and have Indian names. Indragnidatta in his dedication declares himself as the son of Greek parents. Another nameless donor at Karli who calls himself not Yavana only but Dhammayavana i. e., converted Greek Buddhist. The Greeks adopted the Indian habit of calling a king by the name of his country or his capital. For examples the King of Surashtra was called Saraostos, Taxiles (King of Taxila), Pallibothros (King of Pataliputra), and so on. The Greeks had not the faintest feeling about the 'colour bar.' They had sought to reconcile the conquered by marrying into their class. The story preserved by Plutarch that after Menander's death the cities raised stupas over his ashes, is noteworthy. In Buddhist literature four kinds of men are described as worthy of stupas: Buddhas, Pratyeka Buddhas, disciples of a Buddha, and kings who are Chakravartins. It is almost certain that every Greek in India became Buddhist as no cemetery of the Greek period has been unearthed anywhere, while there are many stupas in Gandhara containing no coins at all. The Greeks had an enormous number of Buddhist subjects. The Brahmans were their natural enemies on religious grounds. 'And themselves being engaged in internecine family strife and having failed to consolidate Bactria and Northern India into one empire, the Greeks were cut off from Bactria and from the possibility of recruiting more Iranian cavalry. Subsequently

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

they (Greeks) had to regard the Buddhist support as most important for no other course was open to them. They, therefore, made every effort to ensure the Buddhist support and must have done whatever seemed advisable to attract it. They issued, therefore, a bilingual coinage with a Greek legend on the obverse and a Prakrit legend written in Kharoshthi on the reverse. It was not, as is sometimes said, issued for the benefit of the Indian subjects who knew no Greek. What the Greeks meant by that was the very basis of the conquest meditated by Demetrius long ago.—the policy which made the Buddhists to see in them their traditional kings. In other Hellenistic kingdoms, the mint officials needed only Greek, but in India the mint officials from the start had to know some Prakrit and be able to write Kharoshthi and later on Brahmi. Kharoshthi, a script derived from Aramaic is supposed to have reached India about 500 B. C. in the train of Darius' conquests and became the usual writing in Gandhara and Taxila. But as soon as Brahmi became the universal writing of India, the Greek kings introduced the Prakrit legends written in Brahmi as well.* The Kharoshthi or Brahmi letters on the Greek coins which are clearly the initials of Indian moneyar enable us to confirm these Indian citizens. In the Seleucid mint at Antioch it was the rule for two moneyers to sign the coins, one being a permanent mint master and the other a changing city magistrate. In India the Kharoshthi or Brahmi letters would show that the Indians were either the permanent official of the mint or they were the city magistrates. On the late silver coins and some bronze coins of Strato, Zoilus II and Apollodotus II, there is no Greek monogram at all but only two Kharoshthi letters. proving that the Indians held both the offices. The admission of the Indians as mint-masters or officials who signed the coinage, was not a deliberate act of policy. By force of circumstances the Greeks had to rely more and more upon their Buddhist brethren in India.

Flourishing Period

Let us now return to our previous topic regarding the time of origin of the Gandhara sculptures. It can now be safely asserted that the Objective Gandhara sculptures existed prior to Kanishka but not prior to

* It is very much distressful to see that the present (1942) British coins (Rupees) in India bear no legend in Indian character. The inscription in English is no doubt, meant for the Europeans living in India. But the Urdu letters inscribed can, on no account, be regarded as Indian. The very word "Urdu" which etymologically suggests اور دیو (Aur deo) is always the motto of the alien people

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Maues. But as at present no positive evidence for or against can be adduced, authors differ in their views regarding the period when much of the realistic sculptures of Gandhara flourished. Though various writers have propounded diverse theoritical dates it is undeniable that the most flourishing period coincided with the reigns of the Great Kushans a point on which alfnost all authorities are agreed. It is evident from the facts that during the Kushans' rule, Gandhara produced the majority of the sculptures which have made it famous, for their objective touch.

Stone Used

The stone used for most of the Gandhara sculptures is a peculiar variety of blue clay slate, also described as "horn-blende-schist." The stone is believed to be quarried from the hills of Swat and Buner to the north of the Peshawar District, representing the ancient province of Udayana, though its provenance has never been definitely settled. The stone was frequently finished with fine plaster, and the effect was heightened by the free use of colour and gilding, traces of which are still occasionally discernible.

General Features

The most important remains of Gandhara sculptures have been found or still exist in the Khaesta Stupa at Jalalabad, the Tappa Kalan monastery at Hadda, innumerable monasteries and caves at Bamiyan, the Swat Valley (Udayana) and at or ne r Taxila and Peshawar. The Buddha figure appears on the Bimaran casket along with some freshly minted copper coins of Azes and an incribed steatite vase. The inscription is dated in the year of Maharaja Kanishka. The Kharoshthi inscriptions mention the name of a supervisor. It runs: "Dasa, Agisala navakarmi Kanashkasa Vihara Mahasena Sangharame,"—the humble Agisala the supervisor of works at Kanishka's Vihara, in the Sangharam of Mahasena. The occurrence of the name has been exaggerated by some writers with interest and they say that Agisala stands for Agesilas or Ageisilas. It may be possible but such similarity does not prove his nativity or nationality definitely. Another Kushan reliquary is found from the stupa at Shahji-ki-dheri. The Kushan King is represented on the casket in relief in a band below the Buddha figure upon the elevated lotus throne in the middle. The sculptures of Gandhara are executed in stone, stucco, (lime composition) and terracotta (baked clay). Stone being more durable it happens that most of the specimens survived are in that material; but at Taxila we have been fortunate in recovering, besides stone images, a vast number of well preserved stucco ones and a few also in

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

terracotta. The Gandhara Artists, it must be remembered, embellished the images with poly-chrome and gold. Evidence is furnished not only by Song-Yun's account of the dazzling images of Polusha but specimens are still preserved at Peshawar, Lahore and at other Museums. The Gandhara monasteries supply us with the materials for settling not only the question of the amount of influence that Mahayana Buddhism exercised, but also for solving many problems of Indian Art and Archaeology. Considered as pictures of human life, the Gandhara sculptures present as in a mirror a vivid image of almost every phase of human life. The sculptors cause to pass before our eyes landscapes, towns, domestic interiors, streets, fields, trees, animals, etc., with unlimited realistic details. All the material objects of the contemporary civilisation, the costumes of all classes from princes to paupers, furniture, arms, articles of toilet and and jewellery, vehicles such as litters, howdahs, carts, horses and harness, tools, agricultural implements, cult objects and musical instruments are depicted as they were used by the ancients. We are shown the people at work, play and worship, engaged is acts of devotion, marriages, cremations, donations, sports and visits of ceremony. We are not left ignorant of the appearance of dancers, musicians, travellers, ascetics, wrestlers, bravoes, and robbers. The forms of gnomes, dryads, water sprites and demons which assumed in popular imagination since the Pre-Vedic Age, are all depicted clearly before our imagination. The battlemented and guarded city walls and gateways which defended the people from their more substantial and mundane enemies come also as a welcome addition. In short no subject of human interest was regarded as material unsuitable for the Objective Sculptors' chisel.

That Indian influence in Gandhara was not exclusively Buddhist is illustrated by the occurrence of Brahmanical images of gods. But it is a rather mysterious fact that though the Jainas, like the Buddhists were established in Taxila, as architectural remains at Sircap prove, not a single example of Jain sculpture appears either then or at any subsequent period. With few exceptions all the sculptures are executed in the service of the Buddhist religion. Moreover the subjects treated are not only Buddhist, but purely Indian, the personages and incidents are all Indian and centre round the person of Buddha, whose image dominates the compositions. Excavations have made it plain that reliefs and images so multiplied that finally they invaded every

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

corner of the Buddhist monasteries and when courtyards and chapels could no longer contain them they displaced even the monks from their cells. It must be admitted that the configuration of almost all the images of Buddha and Bodhisattva was due to the Mahayana Buddhism which was considerably in advance of the Hinayana School in all complications of ritual observances.

Archaic or Pre-Vedic Elements

The abundance of images particularly those of Hariti and Panchika from Skarah Dheri, and fragments illustrating chiefly archaic elements prove that the common people still believed in the Pre-Vedic spirits and their needs were met by images. Along with a small stupa carefully excavated by Major H. A. Deane at Sikri in 1888, was found the female figure of Hariti accompanied by three children, one of which sitting astride on her right hip in Indian fashion. There are other sculptures representing the Yaksha couple Hariti and Panchika, Hariti who is represented either as standing or seated, can be readily recognized from the children hanging around her. Panchika is identified as the Yaksha war lord, In one of the sculptures. he appears bearded. In some reliefs the couple are standing under a tree and in others they are seated on a long bench. As children and wealth are the common wishes of the human heart it is not surprising that the Yaksha couple received the greater part of the devotion of the faithful laity, and that images of the Tutelary couple should be so abundant. The remarkable image representing the Yaksha king and the striking scene of Mara's threatening host of demons on the march to wrest from Buddha his seat under the Bodhi tree, are of outstanding merit. Sculptural representations of Nagas are found at Loriyan Tângai. Takhti Bahi, and in the Kanheri Caves. Figures of Nagas, both with the full human form and also showing only the trunk, are represented upholding the lotus-throne of Buddha, or standing behind the altar with the snake hood over the head or wishing to be admitted into the order. The recent excavations around the village of Shahri Bahlol, have yielded the so-called Bachhanal or Madhupan scenes. The bearded heads are unmistakably derived from the local features. The motifs such as the winged lions, human-headed bulls and the stepped merlons some of which had already appeared in the early Indian sculptures, testify to the continuation or contact with the early ones.

Specimens of

Some European writers on Gandhara sculptures tell us frequently that in Gandhara, no symbolical represen-

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Symbolic Art

tation of Buddha is known. This is their traditional instinct to ignore the real facts whenever they write on Indian topics. But the actual remains and the period to which they belong are our surest guides, and we have now sufficient evidence to deal with the topic with reasonable confidence. In the early Gandhara sculptures had arisen the wheel symbol with or without the trident upon it, representing the doctrine of Buddha. The Shahri Bahlol collection contains the worship of Buddha's headdress which was snatched up to heaven by the gods, the cult of the Relics, and the cult of the Bowl. It should be noticed that all these symbolic sculptures in Gandhara were in common with those of other places in India long before the rise of the Mahayana School. The history of Buddhism would show that Mahayanism was not in vogue in Gandhara earlier than Maues' conquest. The converted Greek princes were Hinayana and this fact is supported by the symbols on their coins. The lion on their square bronze coins is the symbol of Sakya Sinha. The symbol of stupa (like a hill) on the reverse and the Bodhi tree in a rail on the obverse is one of their commonest types all over Taxila. The symbolic lion (Sakya Sinha), the humped bull (the Symbol of Brisha Rashi) and the elephant symbolising Birth appear on both the round and square silver coins of Apollodotus who ruled over Gandhara and Taxila. The elephant-head and the ox-head on Menander's coins signify the Birth and the Brisha Rashi of Buddha respectively. The Greek word in the Kharoshthi legend on his coins is referred to the Buddhist Dhamma. The other symbol on his coin, the Sala branch, displays the idea of Kusinara. Menander's wheel of the Chakravartin means that he claimed or others claimed for him, that he was a Chakravartin, a king of the wheel. Symbolical representations also occur in the later Gandhara sculptures but their scarcity suggest the growing popularity of the Mahayana representation of the Buddha figure. The sacred wheel is shown on the front of the Buddha's seat. The deer reclining on either side of the wheel serve to remind the faithful of the Mrigadava the place where the sermon was first delivered. Small model stupas are found in large abundance in the Swat Valley more or less disintegrated, but which might probably with proper care, have been carefully pieced together. The nimbus is not wanting in the Gandhara sculptures. The halo behind the Buddha's head appear on the Shahji-dheri casket. On the relief from Jamalgarhi, Gautama not merely as Buddha but also as a prince, receives the nimbus

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

which proves that at that time the Mahayana School was already generally accepted. Some further symbols that strike us in the Gandhara Buddha images are the Urna and Ushnisha; the sitting attitude and the position of the hands; the thirty-two major and eighty minor signs of physical characteristics.

Jataka Scenes

Reliefs representing the Jatakas are very few. The bas reliefs that adorn the front of the steps of the stairs of the Jamalgarhi monastery, contain about sixteen Jataka scenes. Among them the Visantara and Syama Jatakas can be easily recognised. In the Kanheri Caves, the various acts of the Dipankara Jataka are all shown simultaneously as parts of one composition, the same figures being repeated as often as necessary to carry the action forward. The Gandhara artists rarely represented consecutive scenes in this way. They usually depicted the various episodes of a story in a series of separate panels arranged in chronological sequence, This relief, therefore, suggests the retention of the old method in continuation with the new development. The Jataka scenes were much commoner in the older monuments than in Gandhara. The few that do occur were taken preferably from the touching stories of the Dipankara Jataka, Syama Jataka. Chhaddanta Jataka, Vessan tara, Sibi, Rishyasringa, Chandra Kumar, and Avidurenidana Jatakas.

Buddha's Life Scenes

The Gandhara sculptors' work consists mainly of rows of reliefs which visualize the life of Buddha in chronological order and with such pains-taking completeness that hardly a single episode is missing. The long series of reliefs, about one hundred and two in number, illustrate the life story of Buddha. Some of them are of outstanding merit. The lower part of the relief from Sikri, represents the child Buddha taken to the Vimalavyuha garden to be decked with the royal jewellery. Another sculpture from Swat representing the visit of Sakra and his retinue with the Gandhara harper Panchasikha to Buddha whilst he was living in the Indrasailaguha near Buddha Gaya, may well be ascribed to the best period of Gandhara sculptures. Another relief from Swat represents the story of the first sermon in the Mrigadava at Isipatana in the vicinity of Benares. There are reliefs to celebrate Buddha as master over fire and water. Buddha standing on water springs with his nimbus surrounded by flames, is reverenced as master of the elements of fire and water. There are three plates representing Gautama's Abhinishkramana. The Ram-bearer-Buddha cannot fail us to

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

remark its priority long before the statue of the Good Shepherd in the Christian Museum of Lateran came into existence. 'The offering of the Handful of Dust' identifies the child in this legend with Asoka the Great. There are scenes depicting the Maha-parinirvana; the representations differ in minor details, but the general features are common to all. The small figure of an ascetic is seated in front of the couch on which the dying teacher lies. Vajrapani stands at the head of the coach, holding up his right hand in dismay and grief at the demise of the Master whom he had constantly followed to protect. Besides the heavenly deities, there are mortal disciples of Buddha as well as the Yakshas, the Nagas, and representatives of all living creatures, assembled as mourners. The background of the compositions is almost always filled in by the traditional two sala trees of the little wood of Kusinara. usually with the tree spirits rising among the foliage to adore the dying Teacher.

Images of Brahmanical Deities and Rishis

The Gandhara images were not exclusively Buddhistic. Many Jataka scenes and scenes from the life of Buddha include the figure of Indra and Panchika. On the relief from Jamalgarhi the Sun and the Moon are represented with the nimbus. Sarasvati the Brahmanical goddess of Music is represented sitting sideways on a lion and holding on her knees a musical instrument in the form of lute. Even the representation of the figures of the Brahmanical Pantheon with their 'unnatural' forms was not repugnant to the taste of the later artists of Gandhara and Jalandhara. The Shiva-image, three headed. three eyed, and six armed, standing before the bull Nandi, and holding the damauru, trisula. and Kamandalu, is found from Charsadda. Multiarmed figures of Vishnu (842 M) and Shiva (676 M) are of considerable interest. The mutilated statue of the Rishi Ekasringa shows the remarkable realistic skill with which it has been metalled.

Buddha Images

The idea of representing Buddha as a human incarnation of God took place in the Mahayana system and reminds us of the influence of Bhakti. Bhakti means self-oblivious devotion to God. It is the Bhagavat Gita which first enjoined the worship of a personal God and led to the divine Buddha of the 'Great Vehicle' the Mahayana. Bhagavatism started at Mathura the traditional birth place of Krishna. Mathura was situated on the great high road, the most frequented road in India, which ran from Pataliputra and

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

the Gangetic plain through Mathura, Taxila and Pushkalavati to Kapisa and thence to the west. By about 100 B. C., the Bhagavata Religion was well established in places as far distant as Taxila as is shown by the Basnagar column of Heliodorus and by another column at Bhilsa. Though it is not known when and where Bhakti first began to affect Buddhism it seems impossible to separate Mahayanism by any long interval from the beginning of the Bhagavat religion which gave the impulse. Mahayanism, therefore, had reached Gandhara neither much earlier nor much later than 70 B. C. The Buddha image in Gandhara had nothing to do with the Greeks. It would have been essentially what it has been had Greeks never existed there. The Greeks had brought neither architect nor sculptor with them. The new Taxila which Demetrius built on Sircap must be noticed in this connection. The city had not even that indispensable feature of a Greek city, a stone wall; it had only the mud wall of an Indian town, and a stone wall was first built by the Sacas. The Greeks who embraced Buddhism were all Hinayana. They, therefore, could not have any idea of image-worship or worshipping Buddha as a human incarnation of God. The Hinayana conception of Buddha does not suggest that Buddha was more than a man, a mortal. The Hinayanists do not attribute any trancendental or theistic element to Buddha. In short, they conceived Buddha's rupa-kaya as that of a human being, and his dhammakaya as the collection of his dhammas i. e. doctrines and disciplinary rules collectively. They were not able to forget or rise above the human conception of Buddha. It were the Mahayanists who first conceived Buddha docetically, and distinguished the conception of Sambhogakaya from that of Rupa-kaya. The Dharma-kâya corresponds to the impressional absolute of the Vedanta, the Broahmo, and the Sambhogakaya to the Isvara when Broahmo assumes name and form. All available evidences point to the conclusion that not a single Buddha figure in sculpture has yet been discovered in Gandhara that can be assigned to an epoch earlier than the advent of the Mahayana form of Buddhism. The earlier Indian sculptors of Gandhara who belonged to the Hinayana sect of Buddhism never ventured to portray with brush or chisel the person of Buddha. They were content to indicate his supposed presence by mere symbols, and did not presume to imagine his bodily likeness. But with the advent of Mahayanism, however, all this was altered. The image of Buddha began to dominate almost every composition. Buddha appeared in every scene, standing, sitting or lying down, occupying the centre of each panel,

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Nagarjuna introduced the complicated ritualistic and idolatrous Mahayanism, though a minority still adhered to the old Hinayana system. Thus the balance of real evidence tends to show that the Buddha-image came into general use in Gandhara about the beginning of the reign of Kanishka who held the fourth convocation at which Nagarjuna was apparently the presiding genius,

In Gandhara the Buddha figure had first appeared on coins and then in sculptures. The representation of the Buddha statue first appeared on the coins of Maues who reigned from 80 to 58 B. C. The earlier coins of Maues show the symbolic elephant on the obverse and the humped bull on the reverse. But later the place of the humped bull was taken by the figure of Buddha seated cross-legged. A series of coins struck by Kujula Kadphises after the conquest of the Paropanisadae, show on the obverse a seated Buddha with one hand raised in benediction. Kanishka continued the tradition and his coins bear the standing figure of Buddha in diaphanous robes, with nimbus, body-halo, and the legend "Boddo."

The greatest contribution of the Objective Indian Artists is the representatian of the human incarnation of God. And there can be no considerable disagreement among scholars that the Gandhara Buddha-image is their greatest artistic success. But it must be rembered that before the iconic Buddha type evolved out, they studied an infinite variety of human figures, in detail as for the subtleties of facial modelling and expression. It is not strange, therefore, that the careful observer will notice a very pronounced variety among the Gandhara Buddha-images. Thus, to mention externals only, sometimes the figure is moustached, sometimes it is clean shaven, sometimes the right shoulder is bare, sometimes both shoulders are draped. The hair is somewhere naturalistically represented as waved and brushed back from the forehead. Somewhere it is arranged schematically in little curls. Indeed the more the figures are studied in detail, the more noticeable are the differences, but they all represent the One Great Teacher. Within the relatively narrow district of Gandhara the different types prevail. In the Bimaran reliquary, drapery covers both shoulders and falls down from the forearms. The beardless face looks rather ordinary. There is no urna or mole between the eyes, nor are there any spiral locks. The thick hair covering the head is twisted on the crown of the head into a large knot. Of the Buddha-image from Loriyan Tangai, the head is missing, the drapery covers both the

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

shoulders. The seated Buddha from Takhti Bahi appears with the Urna. The hair appears to be thick, running in moving waves backwards from the forehead; the ushnisha, wide and full, is part of the hair dressing. In the relief panel from the Dames' Collection (now in Berlin), the Buddha stands with long hair and moustaches and the robe falling over the feet. The Buddha from Swat Valley, is represented with a youthful face, the eyes half-closed, a slight smile about the mouth, the urna unmarked, the hair wavy, and dressed with the robe over both shoulders. Another Buddha figure from Swat district shows in the face the moustache indicated by some lightly marked lines behind the corners of the mouth. A very emaciated form of Buddha was found at Sikri along with a small stupa. In the capital from Jamalgarhi there appears among the foliage, a small figure of Buddha. The face of the Buddha statue at Mardan, is distinctly universal, dignified and calm, which is undoubtedly the highest stage of divine personality.

Besides the various facial expressions, there is also little uniformity of style regarding the treatment of hands, hair, drapery, pedestals etc. The Buddha images with different mudras is noticeable in Gandhara. The hair exhibit no less variety than the faces and bear witness to the varying skill of the artists. In some cases it is light wavy strands over the high Ushnisha. Another treatment of the hair is seen where the ushnisha is treated schematically in little loose curls. A different treatment is noticed where the whole head is covered by little snail shell like curls. Now all these various styles are prevalent in Gandhara side by side with a few miles of each other. The exact date at which the various types succeeded each other is uncertain. In the treatment of drapery there are two distinct types. In one, the drapery folds closely cling to the body and run parallel. In another the body is concealed and the folds are loosely and naturalistically treated. Again, the robe sometimes covers both shoulders and the feet, and sometimes leaving the right side free and the feet uncovered. There are a number of sculptures particularly among those coming from Sahri Bahlol and Takhti Bahi which possess either of the two styles but sometimes mixed also.

The pedestals in Gandhara sculptures are of great interest and worthy of notice. The pedestals of standing figures naturally differ from those of seated ones. Of the former class, which are generally rectangular blocks, some show in low relief miniature figures of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas, together with their devoted

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

donors. On other specimens there are floral motifs covering the entire face of the pedestal. Sometimes a lotus appears beneath the feet of the deity. In the case of seated figures, the seat is conceived of as a throne. In some sculptures the deity is seated on a lotus seed-capsule having a long stem morticed into the inverted petal portion below. The seat of the Buddha on the Shahji-ki-dheri casket conforms to this inverted lotus type. Originally, most of these lotus seats or pedestals must have been in two detachable portions i. e,. one piece representing seed-capsule with a tenon, forming part of the figure itself and the other being the inverted petal portion at the base. Due to the fault of the earlier unwise archaeologists the two pieces were very often separated from one another for the sake of convenience in transport, with the result that there are now quite a number of loose pieces of the lower member, but it is not possible to make out to which particular images they belong.

Bodhisattva Images

Side by side with the Buddha images we find the representation of the Bodhisattva,—the Master on the way to Enlightenment. This is another great contribution of the Objective Indian Artists. In the iconography of Gandhara as elsewhere, the Bodhissattvas are treated as a class of princely figures wearing elaborate ornaments. The Gandhara Artists gave rein to their fancy and in the muscular treatment of the body and the moustache. The Boddhisattvas are always clad in the traditional Indian garments. A short skirt covers the lower limbs to the ankles. A long shawl like garment passing across the shoulders, is wrapped round the left upper arm, and thrown behind hanging by the left side. The other end usually falls in a graceful loop before the body and is upheld by the right arm. All the standing Bodhisattvas wear sandals. Earrings sometimes of elaborate form adorn these figures. The hair is sometimes bound by a jewelled fillet and falling behind the shoulders in wavy locks. In some cases it is almost entirely concealed by an elaborate headdress ornamented by jewelled dragons and other monster or by a plaque displaying a seated Buddha. Like the Buddha figures these Gandhara Bodhisattvas also exhibit varying degrees of excellence. The Bodhisattva-images in the Pipon Collection (in the Peshawar Museum) are remarkable for their indicating the transitional form between the older figure and the later or more realistic type.

The monotonous sameness of Buddha and Bodhisattva images

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

cannot be noticed in Gandhara. The nature of the garments, the canonical postures, the treatment of the hair, reveal great diversity. The numerous facial expressions bear witness to the versatility and diligence of the Objective Indian Artists. It was not a question of representing the Sublime One in natural human shape only but also in an ideal and perfect dôcetical type with youthful features, gently smiling mouth, half shut eyes with soft full, fleshy parts, finely moulded nose, and sharply defined, luxuriant, and elegantly arranged hair.

The Mahayana Pantheon

There are sculptures which prove that the Mahayana Pantheon were known to the later artists of Gandhara. Among the miscellaneous sculptures there is a Buddha figure on a lotus throne with a long stalked lotus on either side, that on the left supporting a small Vajrapani, the one on the right bearing a haloed worshipping figure. There is another Buddha statue between two Bodhisattvas namely Avalokiteswara and Maitreya. A Bodhisattva with his Bodhi-sakti shows only too plainly how far Buddhism took form in later development. The fact that the eight past Buddhas were known to the Gandhara Artists is proved by their sculptural representations.

Leading Characteristics

The leading characteristics of Gandhara sculptures (objective) are consisted in its fidelity to Nature and anatomical facts. A definite attempt is made towards the realization of the idea of perspective. The figures, when occuring in groups, are delineated on different planes. The light and shade are so well controlled that they convey the impression of a picture. The Objective Artists of Gandhara paid attention to naturalness and reality, endeavouring to render the optical impression in a correct objective manner. They represented the body as relaxed without any tension in its attitude and well graduated. But we must remember that it was in the best period of Gandhara sculptures that the Objective Indian Artists paid their attention to display anatomy. The early subjective sculptures, for examples the portions of an elephant frieze Nos 305. 319, were not chiselled with so much fidelity to nature. Minute and careful observation and accurate delineation are afforded in the later objective representations. The importance of the Gandhara sculptures is to be sought in the representation of Buddha in human as well as docetical shape with the most important physical characteristics (Lakshanas) established by Indian tradition. The other points what we observe at Gandhara are a marked dimunition in the number of Jatakas, and symbolical

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

representations, and an indefinite multiplication of episodes borrowed from the youth or the teaching career of the Master. The entire life story of Buddha is portrayed in plastic forms. The Objective Artists preferred direct representation, and applied it with so much talent that the various episodes. in spite of the disarrangement and mutilation of the reliefs, can in most cases be definitely identified. In the early stages the appearance of Buddha was a part of the episodes from his legend. But in the course of time the Objective Indian Artists went one step further and pictured the Master all by himself as the sole object of worship. Again, these solitary Buddhas were first shown in reliefs and then finally as statues carved in the round. It is true that the figure sculpture in the round was not unknown in ancient India, but then it was little practised in Gandhara.

Aim or Ideal

Indian Subjective Art, instead of idealising man's physical beauty, tended to idealise rather his spiritual beauty, looking inward to the eternal—so much so that in the Subjective sculptures Buddha was invariably represented symbolically, never in bodily form. The vision of the Subjective Artists was bounded by the immortal rather than the mortal, by the infinite rather than finite. But to the Objective Artists, Man, Man's spiritual beauty through physical gracefulness were everything ; and it was the apotheosis of this beauty which became the key-note of the Objective sculptures of Gandhara. It was the Objective Artists who conceived the idea of selecting the most perfect qualities from the most perfect human beings, and caused them to appear to coexist in the images of their divinities. Beauty for them, was for devotional love, and not for idle pleasure. They had the artistic insight to seek beauty which is inherent in aspects of matter or form. That is why their work is still anxious to express as faithfully as possible the impression which it had received from nature ; it goes through the world with senses wide awake, trying to understand it in its entirety. The whole of Gandhara Art has been based upon the objective idea, that God's image is centred in the perfect human form. As the theory of incarnation brought God to earth and made Him the most perfect of men ; so the Objective Indian Artists raised the most perfect of men up to heaven by representing him as even as God. From the very time of the Gita, the Objective Indian Artists have been feeling conscious of the fact that, the vast majority of mankind require a personality. They must have a Personal God, in some form or other. Buddha

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

had not died three hundred years before the Objective Indian Artists manufactured a Personal Buddha out of his most perfect disciples.

Gandhara and Mathura Images

The first principle which is to be kept in mind in the examination of all Indian religious iconography is that it was the Bhakti cult that suggested to the Indian mind the idea of making images and that the cult of the image formed part of all the popular religions of India before the rise of the Kushan Empire. It arose in Mathura and thence gradually spread all over India. Mathura was the creative home whence all Indian iconography was by degrees propagated throughout the rest of India. We have to accept it as an historical fact of which we can neither deny the existence nor minimize the significance. Mathura had been the great manufactory for the supply of images in India. A careful study of all Indian sculptural images would convince one to the conclusion that the common forms of different religious images must be tabulated with reference to the prototypes in Mathura. It can now be positively asserted as Victor Goloubew had merely hinted that Buddha-figures were first made in Mathura and afterwards elsewhere. Practically every element essential to the iconography of Buddha and Bodhisattva figures appeared in Mathura before it was known elsewhere. So it is hardly inconceivable that the Buddha image in Gandhara evolved from that of Mathura. Mathara produced numerous Buddha and Bodhisattva images of various designs. though apparently few examples as the prototypes of Gandhara Buddha and Bodhisattva have survived. Peculiarities similar to Gandhara types can still be traced clearly in Mathura especially in certain reliefs. A few images representing male beings adorned with rich headgear and a profusion of ornaments that have still survived in Mathura, are, no doubt, prototypes to the princely figures of Gandhara, representing Bodhisattvas. Among them the future savoiur Maitreya may be recognised by the ambrosia vase which he holds in his right hand, and the same pose in which he later on appears in Gandhara. There are specimens in Gandhara similar to the Mathura type (mixed) where the drapery leaves the right shoulder and the right arm free, the ushnisha is clearly marked and the hair is arranged upon the head in spiral curls, while the feet, protruding from the drapery, lie flat and uncovered upto the thighs. Both the spiral locks as well as the curly hair had been known to the Mathura sculptors from the very beginning. The type with curly hair is referred to in the Nidanakatha to the effect that when the

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Bodhisattva shore his locks, becoming a hermit, his hair was reduced to two inches in length, and curling from the right, lay close to his head, and so remained as long as he lived. Both the lotus-throne (Padmasana) as well as the lion-throne (Singhasana) were well known to the Mathura Artists. In the standing figures of Friar Bala's Bodhisattva, a lion is represented seated between the rather widely separated feet of the Master. Model images were exported from Mathura not only to Gandhara but elsewhere as well. The Anyor Buddha represents the same manner as in Gandhara; the drapery covers both shoulders. The Drapery of the well known Buddha from Sitala Ghati covers the entire body, leaving only the feet free. The socle too ends in two lions. The Buddha statue at Set Mahet discovered by Marshall shows similarity with the so-called Gandhara characteristics. The lions are represented full faced and with jaws wide open just like the Gandhara type. Out of a series of seven Buddhas in the Lucknow frieze two of them entirely draped, clearly establishes the fact that Mathura was evidently responsible for the origin. The types similar to the Gandhara ones are still traceable in Tibet, China, and Japan. If we examine the great number of Buddha-images throughout India produced and transported from Mathura after the year 49 of the Kanishka era, we shall have to admit that with the sole exception of the Mankuwar Buddha all the figures have more or less common peculiarities. The image of Buddha reduced to a skeleton performing austere penances for six years at Buddha Gaya is found both at Maholi and Gandhara. Besides the images of Buddha and Bodhisattva, there are sculptures depicting the life scenes on the Dhruv Tila stupa-drum; the decorative motif of garland bearing Erotes, image of Hariti, the so-called Herakles and the Nemaeon lion and the various Bacchanalian or Madhupan compositions, both at Mathura and Gandhara that afford much assistance towards establishing their genetic connection. But we must not forget that though the images were exported from Mathura, yet the Sculptors of Gandhara accepted its main attributes only and then transformed the expression into something quite different. We must not loose sight of the fact that for a number of years the Indian Objective Sculptors had been at work in Gandhara, before the ideal, divine, and realistic type came out.

So-Called Hellenistic Motifs

The so-called Hellenistic motifs in Gandhara sculptures have received much attention in Europe and have been the subject of voluminous discussion. Nearly all

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

the European Art-critics have attempted to trace the origin of the motifs to the Bactrian Greeks and inferred with vigour that Gandhara Art owes everything to the West. They tried to repesent the Gandhara Art as an eastward extension of the Hellenistic civilisation. The controversy on the subject excites some heat in the disputants. Although it may create a feeling of disappointment in some minds, yet we shall approach it simply as a case in which evidence should be weighed and appraised justly. Some authorities maintain that the so-called Hellenistic motifs are almost negligible factors, others dispute that they underlie the whole fabric of Gandhara Art. The truth, as it seems to me, lies in none of their versions. The motifs that bear the so-called strong evidence of Hellenistic influence are : vine leaves with bunches of grapes, the winged or snake tailed monsters, the kneeling Tritons, acanthus leaves, the Corinthian pilasters, the Bacchanal scenes, the so-called Silenus, Hercules with the Nemaeon lion, and the narrow line of sawtooth ornament above the medallions. The elements in question are almost essentially decorative. Now almost all the European writers assert that they certainly were borowed from Hellenistic motifs. It is particulary regrettable that they give no definite answer to the question as to when they first appeared and the driving forces which led to their importation in Gandhara. They put different theories as to their origin. Some held that the Greeks left in Bactria by Alexander established an outpost carrying with it Greek Art and motifs. Others started their novel conclusion that if the Greeks were capable of producing coins there might also have others among them who were architects and sculptors. General Cunningham's opinion is that the Bactrian Greeks carried with them the forms of Grecian motifs, and either during their supremacy or after their expulsion from Bactria, establised a school of Hellenistic Art in Gandhara. Other theorists hold that about the beginining of the Christian era Greek Art had become a matter of commerce and export, and the Graeculi travelled in all directions with their models, ready to employ their skill and provide motifs by imitations from their own patterns. In other words the Greek Artists in their wanderings everywhere in search of employment carried with them the types aud style of the age to which they belonged and they used to copy or adapt the models of their native art to meet the demands of their foreingn clients of whatever religion. Thus we have such a marked difference of opininon among the very European critics who are known as the greatest experts in the matter. And when all the above mentioned theories

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

proved fallacious and absurd some inferred that the Kushan Kings must have imported Greek artists as teachers for the local Gandhara sculptors and thus through their agency the application of Hellenistic motifs to Indian subjects was accomplished, But others soon realised that if it be supposed that the powerful Kushan Kings did import artists in a considerable scale from Graeco-Roman Asia Minor, it is strange that the these men, instead of teaching in their own Graeco-Roman style. should have proceeded to start a school of Indo-Greek art. and even stranger that no information about the Kushan Kings or the Northern India of that period ever came back to Roman Asia or to the west at all, Then there came another band of critics who attacked indirectly. They vigorously repudiated that the Indians should have suddenly invented the Objective Art out of their own heads without any foreign suggestion. They rashly concluded that it was inconceivable that the Indian sculptors should have failed to learn something from the Greek Art which was so readily accessible to them. It is true that two peoples can hardly live side by side in the same country for a long period without a certain amount of mutual borrowings. But the European writers always try to ignore that India was ever the dominant partner. Indian civilisation was strong enough to hold its own against Greek civilisation and especially in the sphere of Religion and Art. Moreover it must be emphasised that the Greeks in India were not for the purpose of hellenising Indians and there is no sign that they ever ventured to do so. India has yielded no Greek insciption in the excavated area. A number of inscriptions by the Greeks that we possess are all written either in Kharoshthi or Brahmi. The inscriptions that are dedications and votive offerings, do tend to show the special place which India held in regard to the Greeks. Of the inscriptions dated in the period of Greek rule, that of Heliodorus on the Besnagar column is probably the earliest. He was the Greek ambassador of a Greek King, but he did not use Greek for his inscription ; he proclaimed himself the adherent of an Indian creed, quoted an Indian epic, and set up his record in Brahmi. The Buddhist Theodorus recorded his dedication in Kharoshthi alone. Theodorus Datiaputra and the wrestler Menander too recorded their dedications in Kharoshthi. It is possible that the Indian being a citizen in Greek 'polis' was bound to some extent to learn enough Greek for purposes of daily life and understand something of Greek civic forms, but hellenisation in the proper sense,—the adoption of Greek culture as one's own culture, never happened. We get no trace of the 'Culture-Greek' of the West, or even of Indians taking Greek names.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Thus when none of their views satisfactorily met the conditions and as it was absolutely inpossible to disentangle the so-called Greek elements in Gandhara sculptures, the European critics assumed that the Hellenistic forms of Greek art had become largely modified by Indian tradition. On careful examination of the motifs, it will be seen that they have nothing to do with the Hellenistic influence. The Europeans' prejudiced eyes failed them to understand that the seeming cupids bearing the garlands and the so-called Bacchanals are undoubtedly the Yakshas and were known to the early pre-Vedic Indians. The Gandhara treatment of indigenous animals is as original and Indian as that of plant motives. The Indian aptitude for artistic reprsentation of plant life, certainly was not learned from the Greeks Sir George Watt realises that the pinnate foliage motives are distinctly Indian. It is true that they are sometimes naturalistically and sometimes more conventionally treated. But no nation has surpassed the Indians in the variety and delicacy of the floral designs enriching their ancient sculptures. The introduction of the vine into Indian bas reliefs from Hellenistic models is absolutely untenable. Sir George Watt believes that the plant is indigenous on the lower Himalayan ranges, and is even inclined to conclude that its cultivation might have been diffused into Europe from that region. However that may be, it is now certain that the Gandhara Artists had ample opportunities of studying the forms of vine-growth at first hand, and were under no necessity to seek foreign models. Under the supremacy of the Kushans, no doubt, the Gandhara sculptures flourished. And it is probable that during their long sojourn in Bactria and the Oxus Valley the Kushans had absorbed some non-Indian motifs and it was after their arrival that they were introduced in the Gandhara sculptures. But such considerations do not enable us to solve their origin with any approach to accuracy. Partial similitude in the general appearance of two motifs is no more a proof of the one having been formed on the model of the other, than the similarity of two love songs from two distant countries is an evidence of one of them having been copied from the other.

So-called Chinese Influence

A Japanese author Mr. Kakasu Okakura in his "Ideals of the East with reference to the Art of Japan" has come to reveal a greater prominance of Chinese than of so-called Greek influence on the Art of Gandhara. He says that the sculptures follow in the main, the Hang or Han dynasty of China, style in features, drapery and decoration. Mr. V. A. Smith protests that no evidence is adduced in support

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

of these bold propositions, which are demonstrably opposed to the facts. The two Han dynasties were comprised between 206 B. C. and 220 A. D., during which period no considerable peaceful intercourse between India and China is recorded. It is impossible to imagine how Chinese Art could have influenced India at that time. It does not show the slightest trace of any connexion with the Art of Gandhara.

So-called Iranian Influence

Some writers are of opinion that strong Persian elements are observable in the sculptures of Gandhara, and it has been assumed that these elements found their way into Indian Art at the time when the Persian Empire extended over the north-west. But there is no real evidence, however, to support their baseless assumptions. Of artistic monuments belonging to the Persian epoch none have yet been found either at Taxila or elsewhere, and, indeed, the only relic of any kind in which direct Achaemenian influence is discernible, is the inscription in Aramaic characters.

So-called Roman Influence

In many features both of style and execution, the Objective Gandhara sculptures recall to some western minds Roman work of the same period and this semblance has led them to suppose that Roman Art and Roman culture extended their influence as far as Northern India. This explanation, however, is based on a fundamental error as to the genesis of Roman Art. Ever since the time of the Seleucids it was from Western Asia that the streams of art flowed westward over the Roman Empire. Western Asia was the crucible in which the arts of Greece and Ionia were fused together. It is, therefore, a serious mistake to attempt to show the reverse tide and to suppose that the Roman ideas affected the Art of Gandhara to any extent.

Stucco Heads

Besides the figures in stone there are a great number of detached heads made of stucco (lime composition) and sometimes of terracotta, in Gandhara*. They vary in dimensions from tiny sizes of two or three inches high to life size. They are sometimes seated and clothed in folds of drapery, and the hair is woven into rows of curls. The British Museum possesses about forty such detached heads, mostly from the Peshawar District. The Dharmarajika stupa sculptures include many fine specimens of the stucco heads. The stucco fragments from Takhti Bahi are singularly well preserved and, in many instances, of exceptional

*Terracotta heads more or less similar in character were found in excavations at Set Mahet, Sarnath and Basarh.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

delicacy and beauty. Some writers are of opinion that they represent Buddhas and Budhisattvas and minor deities of the Buddhist Pantheon. But some of them (stucco-heads) are extraordinarily bearded and heavily moustached. Enthusiastic admirers of Indian Subjective Art are, therefore, apt to deplore, or even to execrate, the intrusion of a foreign influence. They burst forth that "a Buddha with a moustache is unthinkable in the Indian system." They take it as an outrage on religion and refuse to accept that the terracotta and stucco heads found at the well known apsidal Buddhist temple are of any Buddhas or Bodhisattvas. It is true that many of them are portraits of the contemporary people full of expression and with many and varied faces and head-dresses seemed to be non-Indian. These varities of faces and headdresses are due to the fact that the province of Gandhara became the meeting ground of so many nations. The different peoples that lived side by side in Gandhara were distinguished from one another above all physically. To me, the real significance of the Gandhara stucco figures is that they show the process by which the objective ideal of selecting the most perfect qualities from the most perfect human beings was achieved. All the people including the foreigners, offered the grand opportunity for the exercises of fancy of the great band of Objective Indian Artists whose main endeavour was directed towards the representation of the Monk-God, the realisation of the Supreme, reaching through the finite to the Infinite. And therefore from the iconographic point of view it may be said that the Gandhara Buddha, is neither Greek, nor Indian, neither Iranian nor Chinese, neither Scythian nor Kushan, but Universal. The Gandhara Objective Artists knew that Man is the crown, the epitome of all below him; he is a summary of the past and a prophecy of the future. They, therefore, attempted to arrive at an Objective standard of the perfect man by a selection of what appeared to them most admirable in various types of humanity and in natural forms and appearances. Their aim was to select individual beauties and combine them into that ideal form which Nature hints at but seldom achieves. To understand the Gandhara stucco-heads properly, we must always bear in mind that to evolve the ideal type of Buddha in stone, these were only earlier attempts in less permanent materials and there were perhaps a thousand more which have completely disappeared.

Conclusion.

The impression produced by the European writers is that the Gandhara sculptures form a class standing to a considerable extent apart from the main current of

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

the evolution of Indian Art within the limits of India. On account of its geographical position on the north-western fringes of India, every foreign writer exposed the country mercilessly to every foreign influence. They attempted to prove that the Gandhara Art had no direct genetic relation with the Art of India. They show that between 500 B. C. to 500 A. D., Gandhara was under the domination, successively, of six different nations namely, the Persians, the Macedonians, the Bactrian Greeks, the Scythians (Sakas), the Parthians, and the Kushans, and that the result was the birth of a hybrid culture that found its expression in an eclectic school of art, employing a technique unquestionably borrowed from foreign masters, and only modified according to Indian requirements. Finally they went extreme to convince that "contact with the West imparted an impetus to the indigenous arts of India like an electric shock, waking the land to a new life after the lethargy of countless years of undisturbed peace." But we have already seen that the Gandhara Artists had nothing to learn from the foreigners in technique and their ideal has been throughout Indian. Each of the foreign nations failed to leave any impression upon Gandhara Art hecause it was always guided by Indian religion. Sculptures, Paintings for its own sake did never interest the Objective Indian Artists of Gandhara. Their work had been always for Religion's sake that is, for the sake of God.

On the other hand as the technique of Gandhara Art differed from that of Barhut, Buddha Gaya, Sanchi etc., that is, differing from all belonging to the Subjective School of Indian Art, the upholders of that school assume that the Gandhara sculptures are the work of the foreign artists and patronised by foreign kings. Mr. Havell teaches that the Gandhara sculptors were no better than mechanical craftsmen, hirelings following more or less impure Hellenistic traditions, tarred with the vices of commercialism, insincerity, and want of spirituality. Dr. Coomaraswamy writes, "Gandhara Art is iconographically in part, plastically almost altogether, a local phase of Hellenistic Art, descended from the Art of the Greek period in Afghanistan and the Punjab, but applied to themes of Indian origin." The root cause of their criticisms is that they assume that all high class Indian sculptures must be 'Subjective' and that no 'Objective sculpture' in India can be truly national.

Although the technique of Gandhara differs widely from that of the Subjective Indian Art, we are not entitled to denounce Gandhara Art as lacking in spirituality, and so forth, merely

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

because it does not follow the Subjective Principles of Indian Art. It is our greatest misfortune that the eminent Art Critics like Mr. Havell and Dr. Coomaraswami undoubtedly have weakened this good case and given a handle to the western writers for fanciful criticism. The Art of Gandhara is absolutely Indian and its history is a part of the history of Indian Objective Art which runs a course independent of and parallel to the Subjective Current of Indian Art. The Gandhara sculptures depict none but Indian topics, the saints and legends of a purely Indian religion,—they belong entirely to Indian life. Local elements are many and varied but their is no doubt that they are Indian to all intents and purposes. The Art of Gandhara though later in date is a natural continuation of the Objective offshoot of the Ancient Indian Art. From the 'Subjective' point of view we cannot place its products side by side with those of Barhut and Sanchi, but the sculpures, considering its importance from Objective ideal, would certainly find a place of distinction in the history of Indian Art. They are intrinsically beautiful, skilfully executed, and well adapted to express both the Objective ideal of the Indian Artists and the religious sentiment of their patrons or donors.

The Gandhara offshoot of the Objective Indian Art enjoyed an exceptionally long life and though we know comparatively little of its earlier works we are fully informed from the Kushan times when it reached its zenith. With the passing away of the Great Kushans, the Gandhara Objective Artists are said to have lingered on for a few hundred years in search of patronage. The destruction of the monasteries in the 6th century by Mihiragula, King of the Huns, was a disaster from wich they never recovered. Political and religious conditions in India seem to have been responsible to a great extent for the failure of the Objective ideal of Indian Art to establish deeply into the interior countries. But outside India it achieved a grand success by becoming the parent of the Objective Art of Eastern Turkistan, Mongolia, China. Korea, and Japan,

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER TWENTY- SEVEN

INDIAN ART IN THE GUPTA PERIOD

The disappearance of the Kushan power resulted in violent political and social disturbances in Northern India. The rise in A. D. 320 of the Imperial Gupta dynasty with its capital at Pataliputra, marks the beginning of the Gupta period. The three centuries 320 A. D.—620 A. D., are commonly known as the Gupta period though during the latter half of this period the Gupta Empire was reduced to a petty principality in Eastern India. Owing to the destruction wrought by the White Huns and iconoclast Musalmans, few remains of the Gupta period exist above ground, except in out of the way localities. The sculptures of the Gupta period are mainly Buddhistic and Brahmanical, the Jaina works being few. All of them are executed in Chunar sandstone. But the existence of Buddha-images of the period in Sikri sandstone at Kasia, Buddha Gaya, Prayag, and Sanchi, prove the high reputation of the Objective Artists of Mathura.

Religious Atmosphere

About fourth century A. D., the Vasudeva Krishna cult had become well established as the Bhagvata religion. The Guptas were powerful adherents of the Bhagavata sect and their patronage was the main factor of its rapid progress and development. Although Buddhism was not then deprived of princely favour, its adherents who belonged to the merchant class, must have shared in the general prosperity. The Gupta Kings were not hostile to Buddhism, nor is there any evidence of religious persecution during their rule.

Renaissance

The supremacy of the Guptas in Northern India has been acclaimed as a period of supreme accomplishment in all the branches of Indian Culture. Liberal royal patronage of Chandragupta II and his successors stimulated every branch of Indian literature, science and Art virorously. The improved Gupta coins obviously suggest the revival of Indian numismatic craft. The catholicity of the Guptas towards all the creeds of the day, imparted a great impetus to the religious activities of the people. The characteristics of the Gupta period did not come to an end with the break up of the Gupta power, nor were they limited by the geographical boundaries of that Empire. Their influence was felt not only throughout the length and breadth of India but in countries far beyond.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

General Characteristics

The perfectly normal cycle of the evolution of Indian Art is lucidly reflected in the sculptures of the Gupta period. The tendency of round sculpture that continued throughout the Kushan and later Andhra periods, reached its fullest development in the Gupta period. The decorative tendency of the Indian Artists excelled and reached a remarkable degree of excellence. The sculptures of the Gupta age are free from the oppressive sensuality that appeared in some of the Mathura sculptures, and are marked by moderation and good taste.

Brahmanical Deities

From the time of Asoka onwards, Budhism had been the principal religion of India. The epigraphical records show that practically all royal and private benevolences were bestowed upon the Jain and Buddhist institutions. During all this time Brahmanical Hinduism retained its independent existence within its forest ashrams. It was not until the beginning of the Gupta era that the Brahmans regained their position as exponents of Vedic culture. They began the anicent rites and the Guptas performed the horse-sacrifice. The Brahmans emerged from the obscurity of its forest hermitage and basking in the sunshine of imperial favour, became the leaders of the new national movement. They took the opportunity to propagate the religion of the Bhagavata Gita which contained the spirit of reconciliation and harmony among Jnana Yoga, Karma Yoga, and Bhakti Yoga. As a reaction against the Buddhists, the Brahmans united Brahmanism (i. e., the remnant of the old Vedic Cult) and the different sectarian religions, notably Vaishnavism and Saivism. The first step towards the reconciliation of the Vaishnava and Saiva sects may be traced in the image of Hari-Hara or Sankara-Narayana murti. The final step is to be found in the theological conception of the Trimurti or the oneness of the three forms of Broahma, Vishnu and Shiva. The Trimurti was based on the Vedantic notion that recognises only one God Who manifests Himself in different forms. The three ultimate qualities or gunas in Nature or Prakriti namely Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas were adjusted to the Trimurti. Sattvas or truth creates ; Rajas or passion maintains ; and Tamas or gloom destroys this universe. In the process of the deification it was designed to assign the three functions to the three different gods—Broahma as Creator, Vishnu as Preserver, and Shiva as Destroyer. The three faces or heads of the Trimurti emanating from one and the same body represent the three different aspects of one and the same God and correspond to the three functions,—creation, protection, and destruc-

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

tion respectively. The general mass of India even to day while professing one sect or other, have a general reverence for the Trimurti.

Behind the pale of Brahmanical Hinduism there still lay the old and deep rooted Pre-Vedic popular beliefs in the spirits of monstrous kinds. The Indian Artists of the Gupta period introuced the 'Vahana' (Vehicle) in order to represent the superiority of Broahma, Vishnu and Shiva over the pre-Vedic demons. They represented the pre-Vedic spirits or demons as vahanas upon whom the Brahmanical gods are portrayed standing, lying or reclining. But in order to comply with the long standing popular beliefs, the deities were depicted with many heads and limbs the attributes of pre-Vedic influence. Thus in the sphere of iconography, the Indian Artists offered the unique example that a higher and developing religion absorbs, embodies and preserves the types and rituals of older cults without destroying them. In my opinion the Brahmanical icons of the Gupta period suggest no brand new creation but the adaptation of the older and popular beliefs to new requirements.

It must be mentioned here that the Gupta period merely saw the revival of Brahmanical iconography. The beginning of images of the Brahmanical deities can be traced in the second century B. C. In the Buddhist sculptures, Indra, Broahma were represented though having secondary importance. The Goddess Lakshmi under the name of Srimata devata in the Barhut sculptures ranked as a subordinate goddess. Figures of Gaja Lakshmi at Sanchi, and that of Indra in the Indrasaila Cave prevailed at a period long before the Christian era. The coins of the Mitra Dynasty of Magadha give us the standing figure of the God Agni. The Kushan coins of Kadphises II and Kanishka supply us with the representation of the Great God Shiva. The figure of Surya (Sun God) was also represented in the Kushan coins. With the rise of the Gupta power the position of the Brahmanical deities totally changed; they occupied a very high position.

Buddhism under the Guptas

When the Guptas came into power, Buddhism reached a turning point. The Guptas were, no doubt, liberal patrons of Brahmanical learning, but they did not lay hands upon the endowments of the Buddhist Sangha or attempt to break up their powerful organisation. Nor did they countenance any persecution of the followers of Buddha. Some of the various causes that combined in bringing about the

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

downfall of Buddhism in India, are most common features to be observed in more or less degree in all the principal religions of to day. Mystic magical beliefs, degraded erotic practices, extreme veneration for the so-called priests all lead to gross indecency and lax morality. Gross sensuality and carnal passions of men even to day find a religious sanction in it. A moral corruption, the unbridled licentiousness, and the systematic debauchery, masquerading in the name of religion that once brought odum upon Buddhism, are more or less common features in all the so-called religions of the world to day. But the real causes that hastened Buddhism's decline and downfall were somewhat different. The Hinayana School closed all roads to salvation save the difficult path which led from one grade to another of the monastic orders. No layman could hope to be saved; and even the most zealous votary must have felt that the standard of excellence was too lofty to be reached. Absolute faith, perfect virtue, and supreme knowledge were held indispensable and without them no man could attain Buddhahood, and final freedom from transmigration. Continued celibacy, abstinance, and privation were expected from all who had taken the vows. A long course of prayer, penance, and devout abstraction were requisite before the votary could gain the rank of Arhata or Bodhisattva. The masses naturally followed what was more easy and suited to their tastes. The decline of Buddhism and its final disappearance from India as a separate religious cult were the consequence of the development of the Mahayana School that made the difference between Buddhism and Brahmcnical Hinduism no greater than that which separated one Brahmanical School from another.

Characteristics of the Gupta-Buddha -Images

The important features of the Buddha-images produced in the Gupta Period are: (1) A clear delineation and definition of the forms. (2) Symmetry and proportion. (3) Either curly hair or shaven head. (4) Absence of urna. (5) Greater variety of mudras. (6) Profusely decorated Prabha Mandal (nimbus or halo). (7) The drapery covering one or both shoulders is extremely diaphanous, clearly revealing the contour. (8) The back slab of the image is decorated with the four principal scenes of Buddha's life. (9) The Jatakas are very seldom illustrated.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Jaina Images

The Jaina Tirthamkara images seated in Samadhi mudra in a raised padmasana posture with the richly carved halo round the heads, suggest that the images belong to the Gupta period.

Iron Works

The 'Iron Pillar' set up in Delhi by Kumara-Gupta I in honour of his father Chandragupta II Vikramaditya is a good evidence of Indian proficiency in metallurgy at the beginning of the fifth century, Mr. V. A. Smith writes. "Even now there are comparatively few founderies where a similar mass metal could be turned."

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

INDIAN ART IN THE MEDIAEVAL PERIOD

The mediaeval period in India begins with the dissolution of the Gupta Empire. At the close of the reign of Kumara-Gupta I, the Gupta Empire suffered severly from the irruption of the Hun hordes. The Huns, the nomad tribes had moved westwards from the steppes of Asia to seek subsistence. They were divided into two main streams, one directed towards the Volga valley and the other to the Oxus Valley. The latter section was known as the Ephthalites or White Huns. They assailed the Kushan kingdom of Kabul, and thence poured into India. The attack repelled by Skandagupta in 455 A. D. failed to effect a lodgment in the interior. In 470 A. D. the Huns advanced into the interior and caused the difficulty which the Gupta treasury experienced in meeting the war cost. In 500 A. D. Toramana the Hun Chieftain established himself as a ruler of Malwa. He died about 502 A. D. and was succeeded by his son Mihiragula. All Indian traditions agree in representing Mihiragula as a bloodthirsty tyrant. The native princes formed a confederacy under Yasodharman, a Raja of Central India and inflicted a decisive battle on Mihiragula in A. D. 528. Mihiragula took refuge in Kashmir where he seized the throne of his benefactor, exterminated the royal family, and plundered the stupas and monasteries of Gandhara. He died in 542 A. D. In the middle of the sixth century the Turks made an alliance with Khusru Ansushirvan King of Persia, and the allies destroyed the White Hun dominion in the Oxus Valley. Then followed a period of quiescence that lasted until the beginning of the seventh century. There was then no paramount authority in Northern India, capable of welding together the petty states. The people needed but the agency of a strong, benevolent government to bring them once more to their full fruition. This agency was found in the government of Harsha of Thaneswar in 606 A. D. Besides the ordinary epigraphic and numismatic sources, two contemporary literary works namely Hiuen Tsan's recorded observations and Bana's 'Harsha Charita' shed much light upon the political condition of India in the reign of Harsha. Early in 647 A. D., Harsha died, leaving no heir. Arjuna a minister usurped the throne. He took the field with the 'barbarian' troops against the Chinese mission. But he was disastrously defeated and taken prisoner. The withdrawal of the paramount power left India to be divided into small principalities

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Buddhism

Buddhism, although it had certainly lost the dominant position in the Gangetic plain, was still a powerful force. The details given by Hiuen Tsang and his biographer prove that at times bitter animosity marked the relations of the two great sections of the Buddhist Church with one another. Harsha Vardhana in his early reign divided his veneration without compunction among Shiva, Surya, and Buddha. But in later years he more particularly followed Mahayana Buddhism. He was so delighted with the discourse of Hiuen Tsang that he resolved to hold a special assembly at Kanauj, for the purpose of giving the utmost publicity to Buddhism. Apparently the extravagant favours shown to the Buddhist Sangha by Harsha had made him enemy of the Brahmanical Hindus. The incident of the firing of the pavilion at Kanauj shows that even in Harsha's lifetime there had been a strong protest against his pronounced partiality for Buddhism. Arjuna or Arunasa succeeded in setting aside the claim of Harsha's successor and put himself upon the throne. Thus the orthodox Brahmanism seized the opportunity of Harsha's death to reassert its royal favour in Aryavarta. Buddhism continued to linger in Benares, Malwa, and Gujerat. It retained its foothold longest in Magadha, where it had first taken arise and where it enjoyed the royal protection of the Pala Kings who ruled over that region from 800 to 1100 A. D. All the Pala Kings were zealous Buddhists. They bestowed liberal patronage on learned teachers and the numerous monastic communities. The Buddhist monasteries of Bihar, especially at Nalanda, cultivated with success the sculptures required for the decoration of the sacred buildings. The supremacy of the Palas was contested by the Chandras. In the beginning of the 11th century the Chandras were ousted by the Varmans, who in their turn made room for the Senas towards the end of the same century. Buddhism had begun to loose the strongholds with the fall of the Chandras. The Varmans and the Senas were no friends of Buddhism. The decline of royal patronage was perhaps much a cause as the gradual fading of the marginal difference between Brahmanism and Mahayana Buddhism. The expiring Buddhism, like a dying lamp, still burst forth with occasional brightness, and its sudden flashes of light threw a transient brilliance over the wide-spreading gloom. Buddhism was not finally extinguished until the 11th or 12th century A. D. Numerous images concealed by the departing monks before the inroads of triumphant Islam are found buried near Sarnath and heaps of ashes still lie scattered amidst the ruins to show that the monasteries

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

were destroyed by fire. Buddhism which had once bestridden the whole continent of India, vanished gradually like a rainbow at sunset.

Brahmanical Hinduism

The reconciliation of the different sectarian religions e. g., Vaishnavism, Saivism, and Saktism, as well as the gradual and almost insensible assimilation of Buddism, brought India to the Brahmanical fold. Buddha began to be counted among the ten incarnations of Vishnu :—

"मत्स कूम्मों बराहश्च नरसिंहोऽथ वामन: ।
राम: रामश्च रामश्च बुद्ध कल्कीति ते दश ॥"

The Pre-Vedic cults of Yakshas, Nagas and other nature spirits or demons which had haunted the consciousness of the masses for ages were now admitted to the assembly of the Brahmanical pantheon and given a definite shape in accordance with their frightful and repulsive character. Hence some Indian icons of the mediaeval period express violent superhuman emotion or demoniac passion. The tendency to depict images with many heads and limbs, which had grown stronger in the Gupta period, became predominant in the mediaeval period. So the iconographic history of mediaeval India was, a continuation to that of the Gupta period.

Tantric Mahayanism

In the latter Tantric systems of Mahayana Buddhism, superhuman beings, some male, others female, of a malignant nature and fierce character, also found cognizance as objects of worship. Mediaeval Buddhism in its Tantric forms approximated so closely to the Brahmanical Hinduism that even a skilled observer may sometimes hesitate to decide as to the religion for the service of which the image was destined. The monstrous shape of the eleven headed Avalokiteswar (Kanheri Caves) took form in this period. The Jatakas no longer inspired the Mahayana Buddhists of the mediaeval period.

Conclusion

Pauranic and Tantric mythology help us to understand the mediaeval forms of Indian icons. Those who are not saturated with the peculiar notions of Tantric mythology, confess that additional limbs and heads disturb the balance of the composition and excite a feeling of disgust which calls loudly for amputation. Indian icons of the mediaeval period demand from the spectator a certain amount of recondite knowledge of the ideas underlying the union of the Brahmanical gods with the pre-Vedic attributes. The images are merely grotesque and absurd, they arouse a feeling of repulsion when looked at by any body who is not steeped in the notions ot Indian religious development of the mediaeval period.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

THE PAURANIC BRAHMANICAL PANTHEON

Vedic 33 gods

The striking forces of Nature were, in the course of time, personified into gods and goddesses, and divided into three groups known as terrestrial, atmospheric, and celestial, under Agni, Indra, and Surya. Each sphere of the three deities included ten more deities and thus the total number reached thirty three. The three groups in accordance with Brhad-devata stand as follows :—

(A) *Terrestrial Deities* (Agni's sphere) :

1. Agni, 2. Dravimoda, 3. Tanunapat, 4. Narasimha, 5. Ida, 6. Nakta, 7. Usha, 8. Tvastr, 9. Vanaspati, 10. The Svahakrtis, 11. Prithvi.

(B) *Atmospheric Deities* (Indra's sphere) :

1. Indra, 2. Prajjanya, 3. Rudra, 4. Vayu, 5. Mitra, 6. Varuna, 7. Yama, 8. Aditi, 9. Savitr, 10. Dhatr, 11. Indu.

(C) *Celestial Deities* (Surya's sphere) :

1. Surya, 2. The Asvins, 3. Bhaga, 4. Pusan, 5. Vrsakapi, 6. Vishnu, 7. Aja Ekapada, 8. Samudra, 9. Kesins, 10. Vasu, 11. Samvatsara.

Pauranic 33 gods

The above mentioned three groups, remodelled and renamed lead us to the Pauranic Brahmanical Pantheon. The celestial deities were called Adityas and their number was fixed at twelve. The atmospheric deities were called Rudras and their number was fixed at eleven. The terrestrial deities were named Vasus and were limited to eight. The sum total is thirty one. The two remaining places to make up the earlier traditional number thirty three, were sometimes filled by Dyaus and Prthvi, sometimes by Vasalkara and Prajapati and sometimes by the Asvins. Of the Adityas, Vishnu gradually came into prominence. The Rudras compounded themselves into a single figure of impetuous qualifications under the name of Siva. The Vasus fast receded to the back ground and the time worn Broahma Prajapati maintained himself in the front rank. Thus emerged the Pauranic Triad,—Broahma (the Creator), Vishnu (the Preserver), and Shiva (the Destroyer),—in the place of the Vedic Triad,—Agni, Surya, and Indra.

All the Pauranic Brahmanical gods are supposed to have their female counterparts called Saktis. Without their Saktis i. e., without the co-operation of their female energy, the gods are believed to be powerless. They are powerful and active only with

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

their Sakti, otherwise they are in torpor. Thus with each of the chief as well as minor gods are intimately connected one or more Saktis or goddesses, who play the subordinate part of consorts and without them the gods cannot be in active communion with the world. Saktis may be found depicted in temples in any one of the three aspects namely the calm, the terrible, or the ugly. They have independent existence as well. The Sakti worship is accompanied with sacrifices of animals and human beings. Detailed instructions of these practices are found in the texts known as the Tantras.

BROAHMA

Broahma is the 'Sattvik' form of the all pervading Eternal Spirit called Broahmo. He is the first member of the Paurasic Triad. His principal function is creation. In relation to Purusha or Spirit, Broahma represents Being or Truth. As related to Prakriti or Matter, he performs the function of Creator and represents the condition of activity or motion.

Sakti — The female counterpart or Sakti of Broahma is the Goddess Saraswati who symbolises learning and wisdom and is the patroness of the fine arts. Broahma gives the time-beat of the universal rhythm, and Saraswati sings the divine song or the song of life. The hamsa or sacred goose is the vahana of Broahma and his consort Saraswati.

Image — According to Manasara, Broahma is repressented with four heads and two pair of arms. Broahma's keen desire of never ceasing to look at his beautiful consort Saraswati, caused him four-faced. The upper pair of arms bear a rosary and a spouted vessel. The image may be standing or seated and made of metal or stone. His sacred thread has four strings. His hair is made up as jata-mukuta and he is attended by the two goddesses Saraswati on the right and Savitri on the left. His images are commonly found on pillars, ceilings or other parts of a temple. He sometimes appears riding on a chariot drawn by seven swans. Hemadri mentions some forms of Broahma as Prajapati, Visvakarma, Lokapala and Dharma. Independent shrines dedicated to him are rather rare. Mathura Museum exhibits an important image of Broahma, of the Kushan period. There is a famous temple dedicated to the worship of Broahma in Pushkara, near Ajmere.

Conclusion — Broahma was the god of a sect which is referred to in the Markandeya Purana and the Padma Purana. In accoadance with the Padma Purana, Savitri pronounced curse on Broahma

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

because he ignored her at the time of the sacrificial initiation or 'Diksha' and put Gayatri in her place; and therefore he has no followers. Temples exclusively dedicated to the worship of Broahma are extremely rare. His image is often seen in the temples of other gods. But the main reasons of the cessation of his having many votaries are firstly because he is held to be present in all worship and secondly because his speeial work in the cosmos was finished, he could no longer, be moved by prayer.

VISHNU

Vishnu who held a subordinate position in the Vedic pantheon, occupied a supreme position in the Pauranic Triad. His principal function is that of the Protector of the Universe. Vishnu. as related to Purusha, represents thought power; as related to Prakriti, he is the Preserver, representing equilibrium and rhythm.

Vaishnavism — Vaishnavism evolved out of the Bhagavata religion and grew up in some region outside the Upanishadic influence. Many legends in the Epic and Puranas indicate that there was hostility between the Upanishadic Brahmans and the Vishnuvites. In the Gupta period Vaishnavism was accepted by the Brahmans as a permissible creed. Vaishnavism (Bhagavatism) is a religion of love and devotion to a personal and immanent God who is manifested in the world in individual souls. Of the dynasties that succeeded the Guptas in various parts of Northern India, many were Vaishnavas. In the extreme South the later Hoysalas were most ardent devotees of Vishnu. The pure devotional element of Vaishnavism flourished in the Tamil country.

Image — Vishnu, according to the Pauranic Triad is the Rajasik image of Broahmo. The general description of his image, as given in the Mansara, is that he is standing, seated or reclining on a vahanam, with four arms, two eyes, a yellow scarf, and Srivatsa mark on the chest. He has a royal headdress and his four hands hold the conch shell (symbol of eternal space). the wheel (symbol of eternal time). the Mace (symbol of eternal law), and the Lotus. His sacred thread has three strings.

Sakti — The Sakti of Vishnu is Lakshmi or Sri, who symbolises earthly prosperity or good fortune. Vishnu is usually represented with Sri or Lakshmi at his right and Mahi or Prithvi at his left.

Vahana — Garuda the vahana or vehicle of Vishnu, is usually represented as a powerfully built half bird, half-man, with two wings and having an aquiline nose and round eyes. He is conventionally represented as kneeling on the right knee and with

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

the hands folded in adoration beneath the lotus seat of Vishnu. He had, on one occasion, to fly with a great load which gave him the name 'Garuda' (Guru = heavy, and Uda = flying).

Avatars — Vaishnava theology is distinguished by its doctrine of Avatars, or incarnations. For the suppression of evil and promotion of good, Vishnu (Shri Krishna) manifested himself to the world in the forms of Avatars. Some of his incarnations were the heroes of legends and some were historical personages. Ten is the most commonly accepted number of his incarnations.* They are the fiish, tortoise, boar, man-lion, dwarf, Parasu Ram, Dasarathi Ram, Bala-Ram, Buddha, and Kalki. The minor Avatars of Vishnu are: Dattatreya, Hayagriva, Ananta, Vishvaksena, Jaya and Vijaya, Hanuman, etc.

Forms — Vishnu in his different aspects, assumed different names: Anantasayin, Padmanabha, Ranganatha, Vaikuntha Narain, Lakshmi Narain, Garuda Narain, Yogeswara Vishnu, Varadaraja, Srinivasa, Panduranga, Vasudeva, Sankarshana, Pradyumna, Aniruddha, etc.

SHIVA

Rudra in the Rgveda, is the prototype of the Pauranic Shiva. The god Rudra is mentioned in the Rgveda as a terrific god whose wrath had to be appeased by offerings. The idea about Rudra is further developed in the Satarudriya (Taithriya Samhita) where he is represented both as a malevolent and as a beneficent god. In his latter aspect he is called Shiva. Saivism grew in some region outside the Upanishadic influence. It was accepted as a permissible creed by the Brahmans of the Gupta period, in order to encounter the rather strong Buddhist movement. Shiva was enlisted as the third member of the Pauranic Triad. He is the Tamasik aspect of the Trimurti. As related to Purusha, Shiva represents Bliss and perfect beatitude of Nirvana, but in relation to Prakriti, he is the Destroyer or the dissolving power.

Saivism — Shiva was widely worshipped in India about the beginning of the Christian era. Vasudeva I and Wema Kadphises of the Kushan dynasty styled themselves on the reverse of their coins as devotees of Shiva Mahesvara. The author of Amarkosa gives forty eight names of Shiva. They clearly show that Saivism was a powerful religious movement at the time of Nagarjuna and

*It is noteworthy that the modern theory of evolution are to some extent on the arrangements of the incarnations. First comes the fish, then the amphibious tortoise, next, boar. The half-beast half man i. e., man-lion follows the boar The dwarf man is next manifested and so on.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Aryadeva. Some of the dynasties that succeeded the Guptas in various parts of Northern India were Saivas. Saivism flourished vigorously in Eastern India. Sasanka, the contemporary of Harshavardhana was a devout Saiva. In later times the Senas adopted the cult, and the figure of Shiva (Sadasiva) was accepted as their royal seal. The main interest in the history of the Deccan and Southern India in the seventh century, is centred in the rise and popularity of Saivism and its influence on Indian Architecture. The magnificent sculptures of the Elephanta Caves were the outcome of the activities of Saivism. In the extreme South the later Pallavas and the mighty Cholas were Saivas. A further development of Tamil Saivism took place in the 13th and 14th centuries A. D. An influential and very powerful Saiva sect, known as Vira Saivas or Lingayatas rose in the Karnataka and Maratha countries.

Sakti :—The Saktis of Shiva in his Rudra aspect, are Durga, Gauri, and Kali. In his benign aspect, his Sakti is Uma or Parvati. Shiva's vahana or vehicle is Nandi the Bull. But Parvati's vahana is a lion.

Image :—In sculptural representations, Shiva appears sometimes as the Great Yogi, wrapt in meditation, sometimes in terrific aspect as Bhairava. His sacred thread or Yajnopavita has one thick chord. His matted hair is usually tied on the top of his head and ornamented with a jewel, skull, snake, cresent moon and thorn-apple flower. But sometimes his matted hair encircles the head like flames, especially in his terrible forms. He should have a third eye between and a little above the other two. In South India his most usual emblems are an axe and antelope, but in Northern India, the trident is more common. Other emblems are the drum, skull cap and various weapons. In Saiva temple there will be seen images of the Nandi-bull in a recumbent posture. Shiva is generally worshipped in the form of a phallus or linga. Lingam is the mysterious symbol of Shiva.

Forms :—Shiva is manifested in various forms but he does not assume a human incarnation. His benign forms or *Lilamurti* are ; Sukhasana, Chandrasekhara, Pradoshamurti, Uma-maheswar, Umasahita, Somaskanda, Kalyanasundara, Gangdhara, Vishapharana Dakshinamurti, Vinadhara Dakshinamurti Natesa, Jnanamurti, Lingodbhava, Ekapadamurti, Vrisharudamurti, Gajahmurti, Gangavisarjana murti, Nilakantha or Srikantha or Vishakantha murti, Tripurantaka murti, Kiratarjunamurti. Chandesanugraha-murti, etc. His terrible or fierce forms or *Bhayankara-murti* are : Bhikshatana, Kankala-

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

murti, Bhairava, Virabhadra, Kalarimurti, Rudra-murti, Sarbhamurti, Pashupati-murti, Aghoramurti, Rakshoghnamurti, Mahakalamurti Kalagni Rudramurti. Shiva's other known forms are :— 1. *Hari-Hara or Sankara-Narayana-murti*, when he combined with Vishnu. Shiva forms the right side and Vishnu the left. 2. *Ardhanarisvara-murti*, when Shiva combined with Sakit ; right half male and left half female. 3. *Panchandeha-murti*. 4. *Maha Sadasiva-murti*, having twenty-five faces and wearing a garland of skulls and tiger's skin. 5. *Nata Raja or Sabhapati-murti*. The dance of Nata Raja is believed to symbolise the action of cosmic energy in creating, preserving, and destroying the visible universe. The drum, shaped like an hour-glass and held in the upper right hand, beats the cosmic rhythm-sound representing the primary creative force and the intervals of the beat of the time-process. The flame held in the corresponding left hand is the holy fire of sacrifice. The other left hand stretched across the body points to the uplifted foot of the Deity as the refuge of salvation. The upraised hand of the lower right arm, round which a cobra is coiled, assumes the devotee of divine protection ; the torana or arch of fame surrounding the image is the Hall of the Universe in which Shiva is dancing. The seven dancing postures of Nataraja are Ananda-tandava, Sandhya-tandava, Uma-tandava, Gauri-tandava, Kalika-tandava, Tripura-tandava and Sanghara-tandava. The Puranas say that while performing the dances, the whole congregation of gods, demigods and saints presented themselves to render their obeisance to Shiva, and therefore he received the title of Sabhapati i. e., the Lord of the Assembly of Gods.

Saivite Saktis

Saivite Saktis are manifested in two kinds of appearance. In fearful appearance they are :—Kalaratri, Tvarita, Tripura Bhairavi, Vajraprastarim, Surya, Sura-priya, Srividyadevi, Pranasakti, Svasthavesini, Satruvidhvamsini, Ugra Tara, Dhumravati or Dhumra Kali, Sulini, Pratyangira, Sitaladevi, Trikantakidevi, Bhutamata, Shivaduti, Jyeshtha Lakshmi, Kali, etc. In mild and beautiful appearance the Saivite Saktis are :— Bala Tripurasundari, Saubhagya-bhuvaneswari, Annapurna, Gayatri, Savitri, Sarasvati, Tulaja Bhavani, Rajamatangini, Laghusyamala, Varuni or Suddhamalini or Amritesvari, Kurukulla, Vindhyavasini, Lalita, Rajarajesvari, etc.

Shiva-Putras

Ganesha or Ganapati or Vinayaka is the eldest son of Shiva. He is the god of intellectuality of wordly wisdom. His vehicle is the earth burrowing rat. *Karttikeya (or Subrahmanya or Skanda or Kumara)* is the second son of Shiva.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

He is the god of war. His vahana is peacock. He has two consorts Valli and Devasena. Karttikeya was the national god of the Guptas. *Aiyanar* or *Hariharputra* is the son of Shiva and Mohini the female form assumed by Vishnu after the churning of the ocean of milk.

Saiva Demi-gods

Virabhadra sprung from a lock of Shiva's hair. He destroyed the sacrificial ceremonies of Daksha and slew him. He assumes three forms namely Yoga Vira, Bhoga Vira, and Vira-Vira. *Kshetrapala* is worshipped first in every Siava temple, before commencing the regular service for the day.

Shiva's Attendants

Chandesa appears in each millennium with different names and symbols. In the Kali Yuga he receives the name of Adi Chandesa. *Nandi* is the recumbent bull placed in front of the chief shrine in a Saiva temple. *Bhringi* is represented with three legs.

MISCELLANEOUS DEITIES

The Pauranic Brahmanical pantheon admitted the Pre-Vedic spirits (e. g., Nagas, Yakshas etc.), the nine planets, the Dikpalakas and Dvarpalas to the assembly of gods and gave them definite shapes in accordance with their attributes. They are :—

1. *Nagas* : Sesha, Vasuki, Lakshaka, Karkotaka, Abja, Mahambuja, Sankhadhara, and Kulika.

2. *Yakshas, Vidyadharas, Gandharvas Apsaras, Kinnaras* are illustrated in the rock sculptures at Mahabalipuram.

3. *Dikpalakas* or the lords of the eight quarters with their vahanas are :

Eight Quarters	*Dikpalakas*	*Vahanas*
East	Indra	Elephant
South-east	Agni	Ram
South	Yama	Buffalo
South-west	Nirriti	Man
West	Varuna	Makara
North-west	Vayu	Deer
North	Kubera	Horse
North-east	Isana	Bull

4. *The Dvarapalas* are represented standing at the entrance into almost every Brahmanical shrine with the left leg placed straight on the pedestal and the right is slightly bent. They are Chanda and Prachanda; Jaya and Vijaya ; Harabhadra and Subhadra.

5. *The Navagrahas or Nine Planets* : Surya (Sun), Chandra

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

(Moon), Angaraka or Kuja (Mars), Budha (Mercury), Brihaspati (Jupiter), Sukra (Venus), Sani (Saturn), Rahu, and Ketu.

SURYA

The celestial god 'Aditya'—the Sun was worshipped universally in ancient times. The worship of the Sun in India has been as old as the Vedas. Of the vast Vedic pantheon, Surya alone formed the god of a particular sect. The introduction of Surya-worship in material form in India is ascribed to Samba, son of Krishna Vasudeva. Samba is said to have been cured of leprosy by worshipping the Sun and thereon installed a golden image of Surya at Sambapura (Mod. Multan). In Varaha Purana it appears that on his recovery Samba established three temples in India, at Udayachala (Konarak), Mathura, and Sambapura (Multan). Instances of solar worship are common from the time of the Gupta Emperors. The Mandasore inscription of Kumara Gupta, records of a temple of the Sun God in 437 A.D. The Indor plate of Skanda Gupta records a grant for the maintenance of a lamp in a temple of the Sun. The Gwalior stone inscription of the 15th year of Mihiragula records the erection of a temple of the Sun God. The Vardhana Emperors who succeeded the Guptas at the beginning of the seventh century, were staunch worshippers of the Sun God. Their very names such as Aditya-vardhana, Prabhakara-vardhana indicate their faith, and Emperor Harsha Vardhana expressly applies the epithet of "Paramaditya-bhakta." Hiuen Tsang makes mention of a temple of the Sun God at Kanauj, which had one thousand attendants. He visited the Surya temple at Sambapura (Multan) and the golden image which he saw was destroyed by Muhammad-Bin-Qasim. A fresh image appears to have been installed after this sacrilege, for Alberuni describes the image of his time, as made of wood. It appears that this image was finally destroyed by Aurangzeb. The very great number of images of the Sun God that are found all over Bengal, belongs to a much later period. The Senas called themselves Saura i. e., Sun-worshippers. The solar worship in Orissa culminated in the stupendous structures at Konarak which still stand on the sandy coast of Orissa as mute witnesses of the great popularity of the Sun God in Eastern India.

Image:—The images of the Sun God discovered in India are more or less all alike in their essential features, differing only in minor details. He is usually represented in a chariot drawn by seven horses. The god stands erect on a lotus pedestal holding in

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

his hands two full blown lotuses. He is generally represented as smiling, and his head is surrounded by a halo. His body is covered with armour. His waist is encircled by an ornamental girdle and a rolled scarf passes over his waist cloth. His feet and part of the legs are covered. It is laid down in the Brhat Samhita that the feet of the Sun God should, on no account, be conceived or represented, either in his Dhyana or in his picture or in making his image. Anyone who infringes this injunction will be smitten with leprosy. In the early Indian sculptures, Surya is made to stand in such a manner in the hollow of the car that his legs are invisible. In other images the sculptors left the outlines of his legs uncarved. The uncarved portion appears as if covered by a sort of high boots, but they are not so in reality. In the north Indian sculptures, the Surya image possesses a fine moustache, four arms, and the dress of a local inhabitant. Directly in front of the god stands a miniature female figure, in front of which is represented Aruna the charioteer with a whip and the reins in his hands. The legs of the attendants are also found covered. The horses drawing the chariot are seven in number and are identified with the seven rays of the Sun. In accordance with the Kurma Purana, those seven rays of different colours are called Susumna, Harikesa, Visvakarma, Visvasrava. Samjadvasu, Arbhavasu, and Svaraka. The chariot moves on a single wheel and is said to be attached to the Polar Star by strings and round that star it is revolving like a potter's wheel.

Surya's children are the Asvins, Yama, and Manu. The Asvins are regarded as the divine physicians who cure blindness generally associated with darkness. Of the male attendants of Surya, the one to the right is usually called Pingala. He is represented as a bearded, pot bellied man with pen and ink stand in his hands.

Conclusion :—Surya is invoked to drive away sickness, disease, and evil dreams. The influence of the Sun worship on Buddhist ritual is conspicuously shown in the plan of the stupa, and in the the sculptures of the Lokapalas. The three principal aspects of the Sun during the three principal divisions of the day are assimilated with the Trimurti of the Gupta period. Broahma as Creator is compared with the morning Sun, that is when Nature appears as recreated after her apparant annihilation in the darkness of the night. Vishnu, the principle of equilibrium is compared with the midday Sun. In the evening the Sun assumes a fiery appearance like Rudra-murti of Shiva.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER THIRTY

THE MAHAYANA PANTHEON

The following outline on the Pantheon of the Mahayana Buddhists is offered as the simplest key to a primary understanding of their representations in Indian sculptures and paintings. On the model of the Brahmanical Pantheon was developed the vast pantheon of the Mahayana Buddhism and it was not built in a day. The different deities are the outcome of different periods of thought and that only in a very late period the Mahayanists have a Pantheon approaching anything like the symmetrical and complete picture that is presented below :

Adi Buddha And Adi Prajna

In Vajrayana the vehicle of attaining Nirvana through the medium of Vajra, Adi Buddha and Adi Prajna are regarded as the Universal Father and Mother of the Buddhist hierarchy of gods. Adi Prajna is also called Prajna Paramita. When represented in human form, Adi Buddha begets the name of Vajradhara and is conceived in two forms, single and Yab-Yum. The Tibetan terms 'Yab' means the honourable father and 'Yum' means the honourable mother. The word Yab-Yum, therefore, means the honourable father in the company of the honourable mother. In Yab-Yum representation the Vajradhara is embraced by his Sakti namely Prajnaparamita. The conception of Adi Buddha originated at Nalanda by the first half of the tenth century.

Dhyani Buddhas

Adi Buddha is the Primordial Buddha from whom the five Dhyani Buddhas are said to have taken their origin. All Sanskrit works mentioning the five Dhyani Buddhas cannot belong to a period prior to the time of Indrabhuti (700—750 A. D.). There is no mention of the five Dhyani Buddhas in the Mahayana literature prior to the time of Indrabhuti. But it cannot be held that they were invented all at once. The Dhyani Buddhas are a peculiar kind of Buddhas who are not required to pass through the stage of a Bodhisattva. Their names are Vairochana, Aksobhya, Ratnasambhava, Amitabha, and Amoghasiddhi. Each Dhyani Buddha has a Sakti or consort associated with him through whom a Divine Bodhisattva is brought forth. The Dhyani Buddhas are seldom portrayed individually but they pretty often appear on the tiaras of the Divine Bodhisattvas emanated from them. All the five Dhyani Buddhas (appearing

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

only on tiara) are seated in Vajrasana or adamantine pose but having different mudras :—

1. Vairochana having Dharmachakra mudra
2. Akshobhya ,, Bhumisparsha ,,
3. Ratnasambhava ,, Varada ,,
4. Amitabha ,, Samahita ,,
5. Amoghasiddhi ,, Abhaya ,,

Dhyani Bodhisaktis

The Dhyani Bodhisaktis when sculptured or painted are repsented in sitting posture, mostly in Lalitasana on a full blown lotus. Their heads are decorated with bejwelled crowns. Each Sakti has different colour and a different vahana. The names of the Dhyani Bodhisaktis with their colours and vahanas are as follows :

Dhyani Bodhisaktis	*Colour*	*Vahana*
1. Vajradhatavisvari	White	Dragon
2. Lochana	Blue	Elephant
3. Mamaki	Yellow	Lion
4. Pandara	Red	Peacock
5. Tara	Green	Garuda

Divine Bodhisattvas

The Dhyani Buddhas are always engaged in peaceful meditation and they voluntarily restrain themselves from the act of creation. To create is the duty of their five emanations called the five Divine Bodhisattvas. The five Divine Bodhisattvas affiliate themselves to one or the other of the Dhyani Buddhas and their respective Dhyani Bodhisaktis as under :—

Dhyani Buddhas	*Dhyani Bodhisaktis*	*Divine Bodhisattvas*
1. Vairochana	Vajrasiddhisvari or Vajradhatvisvari	Samantabhadra
2. Aksobhya	Lochana	Vajrapani
3. Ratnasambhava	Mamki	Ratnapani
4. Amitabha	Pandara	Padmapani or Avalokiteswara
5. Amoghasiddhi	Tara	Visvapani or Akasagarbha

The five divine Bodhisattvas are sometimes represented, as standing erect and sometimes in different asanas. Their hair is cut short and on the head is a jewelled tiara which bears in the centre the effigy of that Dhyani Buddha or the spiritual father to whom

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

the divine Bodhisattva owes his existence. The identification of the images of different divine Bodhisattvas is only possible in special instances. They mostly bear a very close resemblance to one another. But some of them have prominant emblems by which they may be recognized. Thus Avalokitesvara or Padmapani has a white lotus in one hand; Vajrapani has a dagaba or chaitya as a cognizance on his forehead and the Vajra in his hand; Visvapani or Akasagarbha is recognized by the sword placed on a flower.

Mortal Buddhas

The divine Bodhisattvas exert their influence over the universe in successive ages through the most exalted of human beings called Mạnusi or mortal Buddhas. The five mortal Buddhas who are a sort of human agents to their five divine Bodhisattvas, are, Krakuchanda, Kanakamuni, Kasyapa, Gautama, and Maitreya. Three ages have already passed and the present is the fourth world, being the creation of Avalokiteswara. The mortal Buddha of this age was Gautama the Buddha who attained Nirvana. Four thousand years after Gautama's Nirvana, Maitreya Buddha who is now in the Tushita Heaven would descend to earth as the mortal agent of the Divine Bodhisattva Visvapani. The Mahayanists hold that a mortal Buddha is endowed with the thirty-two Major and eighty minor auspicious marks or the external charactertstics as enumerated in the Dharmasangraha (attributed to Nagarjuna). The mortal Buddhas are represented by their especial trees under which they attained Bodhi. The trees thus sacred to them are as follows :—

1.	Krakuchanda	represented by	Sirisa
2.	Kanakamuni	,,	,, Udumbara
3.	Kasyapa	,,	,, Nyagrodha
4.	Gautama	,,	,, Pippala
5.	Maitreya	,,	,, *

Like the Dhyani Buddhas the mortal Buddhas have also their respective mortal Bodhisaktis through whom they obtain the five mortal Bodhisattvas as under :—

Mortal Buddhas	*Mortal Bodhisaktis*	*Mortal Bodhisattvas*
1. Krakuchanda	Kakudvati	Sakamangala
2. Kanakamuni	Kanthamalini	Kanakaraja
3. Kasyapa	Mahidhara	Dharmamadhara
4. Gautama	Yasodhara	Ananda
5. Maitreya	*	*

* Not yet known.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

THE JAINA PANTHEON

Jainism teaches us that the universe exists from eternity. It is eternal and self-existent. It consists of Loka (world) and Aloka (no world). There are two ultimate substances (Dravyas) in this world, Jiva (alive) and Ajiva (not alive). The highest goal of mankind lies in Nirvana or Moksha which is the liberation of Jiva from Ajiva. Jiva is entangled by Karmas and Karmic matter throughout all his births and evermore fresh Karmas are pouring in. It is Karma which brings on the Asrava (influx of Karmic matter) into soul. This binding of the soul to the body is 'Bandha.' Hence accrue 'pap' (demerit) and 'punya' (merit) in conseeuence of which, the Jiva revolves in the circle of births and deaths (Samsara). The only step towards Moksha or final release can be obtained by stopping the influx (samvara) and ridding the soul of matter (Nirjara). As means to attaining Moksha there are three Jewels or 'Triratna': (1) Samyak Jnana (Right Knowledge), (2) Samyak Charitra (Right Conduct or Walk), and (3) Samyak Darshana (Right Faith). The principal features of *Samyak Jnana* are briefly as follows: Individual souls are free. In this world they are always chained to bodies. The deeds which they perform in the bodies are Karma, merit and sin. The habitation of the soul depends on the merit or demerit which it acquires; and merit and demerit have respectively greater or less influence during immensely long periods called Utsarpini (ascending) and Avasarpini, (descending) in which human stature and the duration of life increase or decrease by a regular law. Merit secures birth among the gods or good men. Sin consigns the souls to the lower regions, in the bodies of animals, in plants, even into masses of lifeless matter. According to the Jaina doctrine souls exist not only in organic structures, but also in apparently dead masses of stones, in lumps of earth, in drops of water, in fire, and in wind. On this downward path, the intelligence is gradually dimmed till at last motion and consciousness are lost which is not however regarded as equivalent to annihilation. *Right Conduct or Walk* has its kernel in the five great oaths which the Jaina Ascetic takes on his entrance into the order. He promises (1) not to hurt, (2) not to speak untruth, (3) to appropriate nothing to himself without permission, (4) to preserve chastity and (5) to practise detachment from all external and internal temptations.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Besides the conscientious observance of these rules, Tapas (asecticism) is most important for the right walk of those, who strive to attain Nirvana. Ascetism is inward as well as outward. The former is concerned with self-discipline, the cleansing and purifying of the mind. Under the head of 'exterior ascetism,' the Jaina understands temperance, begging, giving up all savoury food, different kinds of self-mortification such as sitting in unnatural and wearying positions, hindering the action of the organs, especially by fasts, which under certain circumtances may be continued to starvation. Voluntary death by the withdrawal of nourishment is, according to the strict doctrine of the Digambaras, necessary for all ascetics, who have reached the highest step of knowledge, The Kevalin, they say, eats no longer. The milder Svetambaras do not demand this absolutely, but regard it, as a sure entrance to Nirvana. By "Samyak Darshan" or Right faith, Jainism understands the full surrender of oneself to the teacher, the Jina. Thus, the bondage of souls can be abolished by the destruction of the Karma and by the suppression of the causes which lead to their confinement. The destruction of Karma remaning from previous existences can be brought about either spontaneously by the exhaustion of the supply or by ascetism. The suppression of causes is accomplished by overcoming the inclination to be active and the passions, by the control of the senses, and by steadfastly holding to the right faith. In this way will be hindered the addition of new Karma new merit or new guilt. The final state is the attainment to the goal which penetrates the universe, to Kevala, Jnana and Nirvana or Moksha ; full deliverance from all bonds. This goal may be reached even while the soul is still in its body.

Jainism and Buddhism

Jainism agrees entirely with regard to the doctrines of Karma, of the bondage and the deliverance of souls. This view is common to it with Buddhism. But the conception of 'Nirvana' with the Buddhists means extinction, whereas the 'moksha' with the Jainas has a positive significance implying absolute purity aud freedom from the snares of Karma. The Buddhist idea of Ahimsa consists in showing mercy to all living creatures of the world. The Jainas carried the idea in the utter abstention from hurting a living molecule and in the refusal to take as food even a dead creature's body. Jainism lays special stress on the rigour of ascetism which Buddhism, however, has sternly avoided as an extreme. In points of heterodoxy against Brahmanism, both Jainism and Buddhism probably stand on a common

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

platform. The Jaina religious sculptures too places some of the Hindu deities in a subordinate category and makes them waiting upon the Tirthamkaras.

Digambara and Svetambara

Jainism is split into two sects namely the Digambara* i. e., whose robe is the atmosphere, and the Svetambara, i. e., they who are clothed in white. Regarding the origin of the Digambaras as a sect the Svetambaras ascribe it to Shivabhuti. The custom of wearing white clothes which the Svetambaras had adopted, was first sanctioned by Sthulabhadra. It is probable that both the Digambaras and Svetambaras existed in the infancy of Jainism and the latter may represent the older sect reformed or amended by Mahavira. Tradition, historical records, and the evidence of inscriptions indicate that they were distinct at the beginning of the Christian era and perhaps much earlier. This almost synchronizes with the time of the similar sectarian division among the Buddhists into the Mahayana and the Hinayana. But it was not until considerably later that the schism among the Jainas was completed by the constitution of two different canons and they refused even to intermarry or eat together. Their usages diverge in the following main points:—

1. The Svetambaras decorate the images of the Tirthamakaras with earrings, necklaces, armlets, and tiaras of gold and jewels; the Digambaras leave their images naked and unadorned.

2. The Svetambaras allow their 'Gurus' to eat out of vessels; the Digambaras receive the food in their open hands from their disciples.

3. The Svetambaras consider the accompaniments of the wooden pots for bringing food as alms, etc., as essential to the character of an ascetic, the Digambaras do not admit their importance.

4. The Digambaras hold that salvation is not possible for a woman, although they have the order of nuns as well. The Svetambaras have not, however, such a view.

Historical Background

Old historical traditions and inscriptions prove the independent existence of the Jaina sect even during the first five centuries after Buddha's death. The earliest authentic information on Jainism is given by the

*At the present day most of the Digambaras wear the ordinary costume of their district and only the higher ascetics attempt to observe the rule of nudity. The sectarian distinction relating to nudity or drapery did not, atleast in sculptures, originate as early as the Kushan period.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

edicts of Asoka Maurya. This prince interested himself not only in Buddhism, which he professed in his later years, but he took care, in a fatherly way, of all other religious sects in his vast empire. He directed the officials called superintendents of religion, to concern themselves with the Nigranthas, i. e., they who are freed from all bonds. According to Jain tradition Samprati the grandson of Asoka was a devout patron of the faith. The Kankali Tila of Mathura yielded among other sculptures some Ayagapatas of very early age. The representations of Jinas in these Ayagapatas of pre-Kushan age, as may be proved from the script of the inscriptions on them, appear to be the earliest in the stages of Jaina iconography. The Kharavela inscriptions at Khandagiri in in Orissa prove that Jainism advanced into south-eastern India as far as Kalinga. Many dedicatory inscriptions prove that the Jainas were a flourishing community at Mathura in the reigns of Kanishka, Huvishka, and Vasudeva. They are all on the pedestals of statues, which are recognisable partly by the special mention of the names of Vardhamana and Mahavira, partly by absolute mudity and other marks. They show that the Jaina community continued to flourish in Mathura. The agreement of the inscriptions with the Kalpasutra (the cononical works of the Svetambaras) proves that some of the Jina-images of Mathura belonged to the Svetambaras. The Gupta period showed a marked development in the iconographic characteristics of a Jina figure. According to Jaina tradition there was a severe famine in Northern India about 200 years after Mahavira's death and the patriarch Bhadrabahu led a band of the faithful to the South. Those who remained in the famine striken land found a leader in Sthulabhadra who summoned a Council at Pataliputra, which collected the Eleventh Anga and renewed the 12th Anga. In the seventh century A. D., we know from various records of the reign of Harsha and from the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang that Jainism was flourishing in Vaisali and Bengal and also as far south as Conjeevaram. It also made considerable progress in the southern Maratha country under the Chalukya dynasty of Vatapi in the modern district of Bijapur and under the Rashtrakuta sovereigns of the Deccan. Amoghavarsha patronized the Digambaras and in his old age abdicated the throne and became an ascetic. Bijjala who usurped the Chalukya throne was a Jain; and the Hoysala kings of Mysore, though themselves were Vaishnavas, yet protected the Jaina religion. Inscriptions appear to attest the presence of Jainism at Girnar in the first century A.D.,

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

and subsequently Gujerat became a model Jain state after the conversion of King Kumarapala about 1160. Such successes naturally incurred the enmity of the Brahmans and there are more evidences of systematic persecutions directed against the Jainas than against the Buddhists. The Chola Kings who ruled in the south-east of the Madras Presidency, were jealous worshippers of Shiva. The Jainas suffered severely at their hands in the eleventh century and also under the Pandya Kings of the extreme South. King Sundara of the latter dynasty is said to have impaled 8000 of the Jainas and pictures on the walls of the great temple at Madura represent their tortures. A little later Ajayadeva, a Saiva King of Gujerat, is said to have raged against them with equal fury. The rise of the Lingayats in the Deccan must also have had an unfavourable effect on their numbers. But in the fourteenth century greater tolerance prevailed, perhaps in consequence of the common danger from Islam. Inscriptions found at Sravana Belgola and other places testify to the prosperity of the Jainas in the Hindu Kingdom of Vijayanagar and in the region of Mt. Abu in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The great Emperor Akbar himself came under the influence of Jainism and received instructions from three Jaina teachers from 1578 to 1597. Persecutions and still more the steady pressure and absorptive power of Brahmanism have reduced the proportions of the sect.

Tirthamkaras

The Jaina ascetic, in his striving for Nirvana, endeavours to suppress the natural desire of man to worship higher powers. Since the doctrine gave no other support, the religious feeling of the laity clung to the founder of it. Thus the Jina and with him his mythical predecessors became gods. The word Jina has the technical sense of one who conquers the enemies such as lust, anger, etc. The Jina is originally an erring man, bound with the bonds of the world, who,—not by the help of a teacher—but by his own power, has attained to omniscence and freedom, and out of pity for suffering mankind, preaches and declares the way to salvation, which he has found. Because he has conquered the world and the enemies in the human heart, he is called Jina 'the Victor'. Because he possesses the highest knowledge, he is called Sarvajna or Kevalin. Another name of the Jina is 'Tirthamkara'. Tirtha means here Dharma or religious system and a Tirthamkara is one who founds the Dharma. The Jaina literature of both the sects furnish the names and detailed history relating to 24 Tirtham-

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

karas. Some of them had flourished side by side and others flourished in succession to one another. As in all religions the Jaina Tirthamkaras were no more than deified heroes, born of human parents, raised to the position of God by their renunciation and great services to religion for the deliverance of mankind. The Jaina books inform us that twenty-two Tirthamkaras belonged to the Iksavaku race and the two, namely, Munisuvrata and Nemi belonged to the Harivamsa family. The Tirthamkaras are usually known as twenty-four belonging to the present age. The mythology takes account also of a past and a future age or renovation of the world, and to each of these aeons are assigned twenty-four Tirthamkaras. But this is not all. In their cosmogony they lay down other continents besides Jambudvipa Bharata or that which we dwell in. To each of these is allotted twenty-four past, present and future Atits or Jinas. But they are in names only.

Tirthas or holy shrines sprang up on the sites associated with the lives and incidents of the great Jaina Tirthamkaras. The six 'Kalyanas' are Garbha (conception), Janma (birth), Tapas, Parinishkramana, Jnana (enlightenment), and Nirvana (death). Monuments and temples ornamented with their statues were built, especially at those places, where the Jinas according to legends, had reached their goal. To this is added a kind of worship, consisting of offering of flowers and incense to Jina, of adoration by songs of praise in celebration of their entrance into Nirvana, of which the Jainas make a great festival by solemn processions, pilgrimages to the places where it has been attained. The images in a Jaina temple are arranged in order of precedence. There is one Mulanayaka surrounded by other Jinas, why hold a less dignified position according as the temple-cult is associated with him. This predominance of a particular Jina is due to the situation of the temple in a place sanctified by him. For instance, in the temple at Sarnath believed by the Jainas to be the birth-place of Sreyamsanath we find his image in the position of a mulanayaka. Other deities such as the Yaksha dampati or Sasana Devatas*, play the part as subordinates to the Jinas and are found in their relative positions in a temple. The Yakshas as a class had existed in popular belief and in literary tradition of the Indians much earlier than the rise of the Vedas. A Yaksha is a devotee of the

*When they appear in individual sculpture, the key note to recognise them is the presence of a small Jina figure either at their head or at the top of their statue.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Tirthamkaras so defines a Jaina belief. Indra appoints one Yaksha and Yakshi to serve as attendants, each Tirthamkara. The Yaksha would be at his right side and Yaksini at his left as attendant spirits or 'Sasna Devata' and 'Sasana Devi'.

Of the Tirthamkaras of the present age in the Bharata-varsha of Jambudvipa, however, we are supplied with minute details. These details are useful for the explanation of the Jaina Pantheon we meet with in the Jaina temples. The Tirthamkaras are placed on highly sculptured thrones and surrounded by other smaller attendant figures. In temples of the Svetambara sect the images are generally of marble-white in most cases, but often black for images of the 19th, 20th and 22nd, and 23rd Jinas. On the front of the throne or Asana are usually carved three small figures. At the base of the seat are placed nine planets (the Navagaraha). Twenty-one of the Tirthamkaras are said to have attained Moksha in the Kayotsarga posture, while Rishabha, Nemi, and Mahavira, on the padmasana or lotus-throne. The distinguishing features of a Jina-image are :—

1. *Long hanging arms.*

2. *The Srivatsa-symbol.* It is a diagram resembling a flower of four petals arranged at right angles one to another or a curl of hair,

3. *Nudity.* The Digambara images are all quite nude; those of the Svetambaras are represented as clothed, and decorated with crowns and ornaments. No such distinction, however, can be drawn from the images of the pre-Kushan period as to their origin either of the Digambara or Svetambara sect.

4. *Attended by Yaksha Dampati.* At the proper right of the Jina is the Yaksha attendant; at the left end of the throne is the corresponding Yakshini or Yakshi or Sasana Devi.

5. *Gandharva figures* are prominent by their presence when the Yaksha figures are absent.

6. One of the *eight Pratiharyas* consisting of heavenly tree, a throne seat, trifineas umbrella and a lion throne, Aura (nimbus), drum (divya dhvani), etc.

7. *A cognizance or chinha or lanchhana* usually placed below the image, They are such as Swastika, mirror, urn, an hour glass, two small fish, flower garland, book etc. There are some Jina-images which do not bear the lanchhanas.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

8. *A snake canopy* is sometimes added behind the head of the figure.

9. The presence of the particular *Kevala tree* under which the Jina attained the supreme knowledge.

10. The vimana or vahana in which the Jina descended for incarnation.

Jaina Image Worship

Tradition records that images existed among the Jainas as early as the time of the Sisunaga or the Nanda Kings. The Hathi-gumpha inscription of King Kharavela mentions of the recovery and reinstallation of an image of Sri Risava Deva removed from the country about 300 years previously. Kautilya the author of Arthasastra makes mention of the images of Jaina gods viz., Jayanta, Vaijayanta, Aparajita. But it is quite creditable that Bhagavataism was in full swing before Jainism necessitated the aid of image-worship.

The Jainas give all free access to their temples of gods and saints of whose images they worship with certain special rites and ceremonies. They have Jala puja (washing of the images), Chandanapuja (worship with sandal paste), Aksatapuja (offering of unboiled rice), and Naivedya puja (worship with food). All this is followed by 'Arati' after sunset. Another custom belonging to the Jainas is the Samayika reading. They believe in and practise Prayaschitta or expiation of sins by confessing their sins before the Guru.

No.	Tirtham-kara	Birth Place	Father	Mother	Vimana	Com-plexion	Kevala Vriksha	Cogni-zance or Chinha or Lan-chhana	Yaksha	Yakshi	Chowri Bearer
1	Rishabha-deva or Adinatha	Vinita-Nagari	Nabhi Raja	Maru Devi	Sarvartha-siddha	Golden	Vata or Nyagro-dha	Vrisha (Bull) or Dharma-Chakra	Gomukha	Chakras-vari Aprati-chakra	Bharata and Bahuvali
2	Ajitanatha	Ayodhya	Jitasatru	Vijaya-mata	Vijaya	,,	Sala	Gaja or Hasti (elephant)	Maha-yaksha	Ajita-bala (s) Rohini (D)	Sagarcakri
3	Sambha-vanatha	Sravasti	Jitari	Senamata	Uvarimag-raiveka	,	Prayala	Turya or Asva (horse)	Trimukha	Duritari (s) Prajnapti (D)	Satya-virya
4	Abhinan-dananatha	Ayodhya	Sambara-raja	Sidhartha	Jayanta	,,	Priyangu	Vanara or Kapi (Ape)	Nayaka (s) Yakshes-vara (D)	Kalika (s) Vajrasrin-khala (D)	*
5	Sumati-natha	Ayodhya	Meghraja	Mangala	Jayanta	,,	Sala	Krauncha (curlew)	Tumbaru	Mahakali (s) Purusha-datta (D)	Mitravirya

(s) In accordance with the Svetambara Scriptures (D) In conformity to the Digambara Scriptures * Not yet known.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Contd.—

6	Padma-prabha	Kausam-bhi	Sridhara	Susima	Uvarima-graiveka	Red	Chhatra-bha	Rakta Kamala (Red lotus	Kusuma	Achyuta (s) Shyama (s) Manovega (D)	Yama-dyuti
7	Suparsa-natha	Varanasi	Prathis-tharaja	Prithvi	Madhya-magrai-veka	Golden	Sirisha	Swastika and Serpents	Matanga (s) Varanandi (D)	Shanta (s) Kali (D)	Dharma-virya
8	Chadra-prabha	Chandra-puri	Mahasena-raja	Lakshma-na	Vijayanta	White	Nagakesar	Chandra (moon)	Vijaya (s) Syama (D)	Bhrikuti (s) Jvalamali-ni (D)	Danavirya
9	Suvidhi-natha or Pushpa-danta	Kakandi-nagara or Kishkin-danagara	Sugriva-raja	Rama Rani	Anata-devaloka	„	Malli or Sala	Makara (s) Crab (D)	Ajita	Sutaraka (s) Maha-kali (D)	Maghava-taraja
10	Sitala-natha	Bhadrika-pur or Bhadila-pura or Madrapur	Dridha-ratharaja	Nanda	Achyuta-devaloka	Golden	Vilva or Priyangu	Asvattha Srivatsa Peepal	Brahma	Asoka (s) Manavi (D)	Simangha-ra Raja
11	Sreyamsa-natha	Simha-puri (Mod. Sarnath)	Vishnu Raja	Vishna	„	„	Tumbara or Tanduka	Khadga	Yaksheta (s) Isvara (D)	Srivatsa Devi (s) Mana vi(s) Gauri (D)	Tripista Raja

(s) In accordance with the Svetambara Scriptures.

(D) In conformity to the Digambara Scriptures

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Contd—

12	Vasupujya	Champapuri (Mod. Bhagalpur)	Vasupujya	Jaya	Pranata-devaloka	Ruddy	Patalika or Kadamba	Mahisi (female buffalo)	Kumara	Prachanda (s) Chanda (s) Gandhari (D)	Dirpista vasudeva
13	Vimala-natha	Kampilya-pura (Furrukha bad)	Kritavar-maraja	Syama	Mahasara-devaloka	Golden	Jambu	Varaha (boar)	Shammu-kha (s) Svetam (D)	Vijaya (s) Vidita (s) Vairoti (D)	Svayam-bhu vasudeva
14	Anantajit or Anatha-natha	Ayodhya	Singha-sena	Sujasa	Pranata-devaloka	,,	Asoka or Asvattha	Syena (s) (falcon) Bhalluka (D) (boar)	Patala	Ankusa (s) Ananta-mati (D)	Puruso-ttama vasudeva
15	Dharma-natha	Ratnapuri	Bhanu-raja	Suvrita	Vijaya	,,	Dadhipar-na or Sapta-chhada	V a j r a-danda (thunder-bolt)	Kinnara	Pannaga-devi (s) Kandarpa (s) Manasi (D)	Pundairha vasudeva
16	S a n t i-natha	Hastina-pur	Visvasena	Achira	Sarvartha-siddha	,,	Nandi	Mriga (deer)	Garuda (s) Kimpuru-sha (D)	Nirvani (s) Mahama-nasi (D)	Puruska datta Raja
17	Kuntha-natha	Gajapura	Suraraja	Srirani	,,	,,	Tilakataru or Bhilaka	Aja (goat)	Gan-dharva	Achyuta (s) Bala (s) Vijaya (D)	Kunala
18	Aranatha	Gajapura	Sudarsana	Devi Rani	,,	,,	Amba	Nandya-varta (s) Mina (D) (fish)	Yaksheta (s) Khendra (D)	Dharani-devi (s) Ajita (D) Tara (D)	Govinda Raja

(S) In accordance with the Svetambara Scriptures

(D) In conformity to the Digambara Scriptures

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Preservation Foundation, Chandigarh

Contd.—

19	Malli-natha	Mithila or Mathura	Kumbha-raja	Prabha-vati	Jayanta-devaloka	Blue	Asoka	Kalasa (water jar)	Kubera	Vairoti (s) Dharana-priya (s) Aparajita (D)	Suluma Raja
20	Munisu-vrata	Rajagriha	Sumita Raja	Padma-vati	Aparajita-devaloka	Black	Champaka	Kurma (tortoise)	Varuna	Naradatta (s) Bahuru-pini (D)	Ajita
21	Nami-natha	Mithila or Mathura	Vijaya Raja	Vipra Rani	Pranata-devaloka	Yellow	Bakula	Nilotpala (Blue water lily) (s) Asoka tree (D)	Bhrikuti (s) Nandiga (D)	Gandhara (s) Chamundi (D)	Vijaya Raja
22	Nemi-Natha	Sauripura or Dwaraka	Samudra-vijaya	Siva-Devi	Aparajita	Black	Mahavenu or Vetasa	Sankha (conch)	Gomedha (s) Sarvahana (D) Puspayana (D)	Amra (s) Ambika (s) Kushman-dini (D)	Ugrasena
23	Parsva-natha	Varanasi	Asvasena Raja	Vama-devi	Pranata-devaloka	Blue	Devadaru or Dhataki	Sarpa (snake)	Parsva (s) or Dharanen-dra (D)	Padmavati	Ajitaraja
24	Mahavira or Vardha-mana	Kunda-grama or Chitra-kuta	Siddhar-tharaja or Sreyaman or Yasasvin	Trisala Videhadi-nna or Priyaka-rini	,,	Yellow	Sala	Simha (lion)	Matanga	Siddha-yika	Srenika or Bimbisara

(s) In accordance with the Svetambara Scriptures

(D) In conformity to the Digambara Scriptures

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

THE JAINA CANONICAL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE TWENTY-FOUR YAKSHAS OR SASANA DEVATAS

[The Yakshas as a class had existed in popular belief and in literary tradition of the Indians much earlier than the rise of Jainism. According to the Jaina belief, Indra appoints twenty-four Yakshas to serve the twenty-four Tirthamkaras. as Sasana Devatas or attendant spirits. The Yaksha-murti is placed at the right side of each Tirthamkara.]

No.	Yaksha (Sasana Devata)	Svetambara Attributes	Digambara Attributes	Vahanas or vehicles	Tirtham-kara
1	Gomukha	Holding Varada-mudra, a rosary and a pasa or parasu (axe).	Having a Dharma Chakra Symbol on his head.	Ox (s) Elephant (D)	Risabha-deva or Adinatha
2	Mahayaksha	Four faced. Eight hands, Holding Varada,, club, rosary, noose, citrus, abhaya, goad, and sakti.	Four faced. Eight hands. Holding a disc, trident, lotus, goad, sword, staff, axe, and vara-mudra.	Elephant	Ajitanatha
3	Trimukha	Three faced. Six hands. Holding: a mongoose, club, abhaya-mudra, a citrus, garland, and rosary.	Three faced. Six hands. Holding a disc, sword, Srini (goad) staff, trident and dagger.	Peacock	Sambhava-natha

(s) In accordance with the Svetambara Scriptures.

(D) In conformity to the Digambara Scriptures

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Contd.—

4	Yaksesvara (D) or Nayaka (S)	Holding: a citrus, a rosary, a mongoose, and a goad.	Holding: a bow, shield and a sword.	Elephant	Abhinandanatha
5	Tumbaru	Holding: Varada, spear, club, and noose.	Holding: two snakes, fruit and varada.	Garuda	Sumatinatha
6	Kusuma (S) or Puspa Yaksha (D)	Four hands. Holding: a fruit, abhaya-mudra, a rosary, and a mongoose.	Four hands. Holding: Varada-mudra shield, abhaya-mudra and a lance.	Antilope	Padmaprabha.
7	Matanga (S) or Varanandi (D)	Holding: a Vilva fruit, noose, mongoose, and goad.	Holding: staff, spear, swastika and flag.	Elephant (S) Lion (D)	Suparsvanatha
8	Vijaya (S) or Syama (D)	Three eyes. Holding; a disc and a club	Three eyes. Holding: a fruit, rosary, axe and Vara-mudra.	Swan	Chandraprabha
9	Ajita	Holding; a citrus, rosary, mongoose, and a spear.	Holding: a sakti, Varada-mudra, fruit and rosary.	Tortoise	Suvidhinatha or Pushpadanta
10	Brahma	Four faced. Three eyes. Eight hands. Holding: a citrus, club, noose, abhaya, mongoose, mace, goad and rosary.	Four-faced. Three eyes. Eight hands. Holding: a bow, staff, shield, a sword, and Vara-mudra.	Lotus	Sitalanatha
11	Isvara (D) or Yaksheta (S)	Three eyes. Four hands, Holding: a mongoose, rosary, staff and a fruit.	Three eyes. Four hands. Holding: a trident (trisula), staff, rosary, and a fruit.	Bull	Sreyamsanatha
12	Kumara	Four hands. Holding: a citrus, an arrow, mongoose and a bow.	Three-headed. Six hands. Holding a bow, ichneumon, fruit, club, and Vara-mudra.	White swan	Vasupujya

(S) In accordance with the Svetambara Scriptures

(D) In conformity to the Digambara Scriptures

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

13	Shanmukha (s) or Svetam (D)	Six faced, twelve hands. Holding: a fruit, disc, arrow, sword, noose, rosary, mongoose, discus, bond, fruit, goad, and Abhaya-mudra.	Four faced, Eight hands. Holding an axe, scimitar, shield, staff, etc.	Peacock	Vimalanatha
14	Patala	Three faced. Six hands. Holding; a lotus, sword, noose, mongoose, fruit and a rosary.	Three faced. Six hands. Holding a goad, spear, bow, rope, plough, fruit, and a canopy of a three hooded snake.	Dolphin	Anantajit or Anatha-natha
15	Kinnara	Three faced, Six hands, Holding: a citrus, mace, abhaya, mongoose lotus, and a rosary.	Three faced, Six hands, Holding: a disc, vajra, goad, rosary, and Varada-mudra.	Tortoise (s) Fish (D)	Dharma-natha
16	Garuda (s) or Kimpurusha (D)	Holding: a citrus, lotus, mongoose and rosary	Holding: a lotus, fruit, Vajra, and discus.	Boar (s) Elephant (D)	Santinatha
17	Gandharva	Four hands. Holding: a Varada noose, citrus, and goad.	Holding: a snake, noose and bow.	Bird (D) Swan (s)	Kunthanatha
18	Yaksheta (s) or Khendra (D)	Six faced, Twelve hands. Holding: a citrus, arrow, sword, club, noose, abhaya-mudra, mongoose, bow, fruit, spear, goad and rosary.	Six faced, Twelve hands, Bearing: a bow, vajra, noose, club, goad, Varada-mudra, arrow, fruit, and garland.	Conchshell (D) Peacock (s)	Aranatha

(s) In accordance with the Svetambara Scriptures

(D) In conformity to the Digambara Scriptures

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

19	Kubera	Four faced. Eight hands. Holding; varada, axe, spear, abhaya, citrus, sakti, club, aud rosary.	Four faced. Eight arms, Bearing: a shield, bow. staff. lotus, sword, disc, noose, Varada-mudra.	Elephant	Mallinatha
20	Varuna	Three eyes, Eight heads. Crowned with matted hair. Eight arms. Bearing : a citrus, mace, arrow, spear, mongoose. lotus, bow and axe	Three eyes. Eight heads, Crowned with matted hair. Four arms. Bearing: a shield. sword fruit and varada-mudra.	Bull	Munisuvrata
21	Bhrikuti (s) or Nandiga (D)	Four faced. Eight hands. Holding a citrus, spear, mace. abhaya axe, mongoose, vajra, and rosary.	Four faced. Eight hands, Holding, shield, sword. bow, arrow, goad. lotus, disc, aud varada	Bull	Naminatha
22	Gomedha (s) or Sarvahana (D) or Puspayana (D)	Three faced. Six arms. Holding: a citrus, axe, disc, mongoose, trident and spear.	Three faced. Six arms. Holding: a hammer, axe, staff. fruit, vajra, and varada-mudra.	Man (s) Pushparatha (D)	Neminatha
23	Parsva (s) or Dharanendra (D)	Snake-hood. Four hands, Holding an ichneumon, snake, citrus and snake.	Snake-hood. Holding : snake, noose, and varada,	Tortoise	Parsvanatha
24	Matanga	Two hands, Holding : a mongoose and a citrus.	Two hands. Holding: varada-mudra and a citrus. Having a Dharma chakra symbol on his head.	Elephant	Mahavira or Vardhamana

(s) In accordance with the Svetambara Scriptures

(D) In conformity to the Digambara Scriptures

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

THE JAINA CANONICAL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE TWENTY-FOUR YAKSHINIS OR SASANA-DEVIS

[The Yakshi or Yakshini-murti is always placed at the left-side of each Tirthamkara].

Nos.	Yakshinis	Svetambara Attributes	Digambara Attributes	Vahanàs (Vehicles)	Tirthamkaras
1	Chakresvari (s) or Apratichakra (D)	Eight arms. Carrying : Varada-mudra, arrow, discs, noose, bow, vajra and goad.	Either twelve or four arms. Holding : eight discs, citrus. Varada-mudra and two vajras.	Garuda	Risabhadeva or Adinatha
2	Ajitabala (s) or Rohini (D)	Bearing : Varada-mudra, noose, citron and goad.	Bearing : Varada, Abhaya-mudra, conch and disc.	Lohasana (Iron seat) (D) Bull (s)	Ajitanatha
3	Duritari (s) or Prajnapti (D)	Four-arms. Holding : Varada, rosary, fruit and Abhaya-mudra.	Six arms, adorned with : axe-cresent, fruit, sword, and Varamudra.	Ram (s) Peacock (D)	Sambhava-natha
4	Kalika (s) or Vajrasrinkhala (D)	Four-arms. Holding : Varada, noose, snake and goad.	Four arms. Holding : a snake, noose, rosary and fruit.	Swan (D) Lotus (s)	Abhinandna-natha
5	Mahakali (s) or Purusadatta (D)	Four arms. Holding : Varada. noose, citrus and goad.	Four arms, Holding : a disc, vajra, fruit and Varada-mudra.	Lotus (s) Elephant (D)	Sumatinatha

(s) In accordance with the Svetambara Scriptures

(D) In conformity to the Digambara Scriptures

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Contd.—

6	Achyuta (s) or Shyama (s) or Manovega (D)	Four arms. Holding: Sarada, vina, bow and Abhaya-mudra.	Four arms: Holding a sword, lance, fruit and Vara-mudra.	Man (s) Horse (D)	Padma-prabha.
7	Shanta (s) or Kali (D)	Hands furnished with Varada, rosary, lance, and Abhaya.	Carrying: trident, fruit, Varada and bell.	Elephant (s) Bull (D)	Suparsva-natha
8	Bhrikuti (s) or Jvalamalini (D)	Hands adorned with: sword, club, spear, and axe.	Holding: disc, arrow, noose, shield, trident, sword, bow, etc.	Cat (s) Swan (s) Buffalow (D)	Chandra-prabha
9	Sutara (s) or Mahakali (D)	Four hands. Bearing: Varada, rosary, urn and goad.	Four hands. Carrying: vajra, club, fruit, and Vara-mudra.	Bull (s) Tortoise (D)	Suvidhi-natha or Pushpadanta
10	Asoka (s) or Manavi (D)	Bearing: Varada, noose, fruit, and goad.	Holding: fruit, Vara-mudra, bow, etc.	Lotus (s) Hog (D)	Sitalanatha
11	Srivatsa Devi (s) or Manavi (s) or Gauri (D)	Holding: Varada, club, urn, and goad.	Bearing: club, lotus, urn, and Varada-mudra.	Lion (s) Antelope (D)	Sreyamsa-natha
12	Chanda (s) or Prachanda (s) or Gandhari (D)	Carries: Varada, spear, flower, and a club.	Equipped with: club, two lotuses and Varada-mudra.	Horse (s) Crocodile (D)	Vasupujya
13	Vidita (s) or Vijaya (s) or Vairoti (D)	Four arms. Carrying: arrow, noose, bow and snake.	Bearing: two snakes, bow, and arrow,	Lotus (s) Snake (D)	Vimalanatha

(s) In accordance with the Svetambara Scriptures

(D) In conformity to the Digambara Scriptures

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

14	Ankusa (s) or Anantamati (D)	Four arms. Having : sword, noose, spear, and goad.	Four arms. Holding : bow, arrow, fruit, and Vara-mudra.	Lotus (s) Swan (D)	Anantajit or Anathanatha
15	Kandarpa (s) or Pannagadevi (s) or Manasi (D)	Four arms adorned with two lotuses, goad and Abhaya.	Six hands, Having : two lotuses, bow, Varada, goad, and arrow.	Horse (s) Fish (s) Tiger (D)	Dharmanatha
16	Nirvani (s) or Mahamanasi (D)	Four arms, Having : book, lotus, Kamandulu and lotus bud.	Holding : disc, fruit, sword. and Varada.	Lotus (s) Peacock (D)	Santinatha
17	Bala (s) or Achyuta (s) or Vijaya (D)	Four arms. Holding : citron, spear musandi and lotus.	Carrying: conch, sword, disc, and Varada-mudra.	Peacock (s) Black Boar (D)	Kunthanatha
18	Dharani (s) or Tara (D)	Four arms. Holding ; citrus, two lotuses and a rosary,	Holding : snake, vajra. deer, and Varada-mudra.	Lotus (s) Swan (D)	Aranatha
19	Vairoti (s) or Aparajita (D)	Having : Varada, rosary, citrus and Sakti.	Equipped with : citrus, sword, shield, and Vara-mudra.	Lotus (s) Lion (D)	Mallinatha
20	Naradatta (s) or Bahurupini (D)	Four arms, Holding : Varada, rosary, citron and trident or urn.	Holding : shield, fruit. sword, and Varada-mudra.	Bhadrasana (s) Black snake (D)	Munisuvrata
21	Gandhari (s) or Chamunda (D)	Four arms. Holding : Varada-mudra, sword, citron and spear	Carrying : rosary. staff, shield, and sword,	Swan (s) Dolphin (D)	Naminatha

(s) In accordance with the Svetambara Scriptures.

(D) In conformity to the Digambara Scriptures

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Contd.—

22	Ambika (s) or Kusmandi (s) or Amra (D)	Bearing : a bunch of mangoes, noose, a child and goad.	Bearing : a bunch of mangoes and a child.	Lion (s) (D)	Neminatha
23	Padmavati (s) (D)	Holding : lotus, noose, fruit, and goad.	(a) When four-handed, holds : a goad, rosary, two lotuses. (b) When six armed, bears : noose, sword, spear, cresent, club, staff, (c) When eight armed, has a noose, etc. (d) When twenty-four handed, holds a conch, sword, chakra, cresent, lotus, blue lotus, bow, spear, noose, bell, kusa-grass, arrow, staff, shield, axe,, trident, vajra, garland, fruit ,club, leaf, stalk, Varada-mudra, etc.	Snake (s) Cock (s) Lotus (D)	Parsvanatha
24	Siddhayika (s) (D)	Four arms. Carries : book, citrus Abhaya-mudra and lute.	Holding : Varada-mudra and a book.	Lion (s) (D)	Mahavira or Vardhamana

(s) In accordance with the Svetambara Scriptures

(D) In conformity to the Digambara Scriptures

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

THE JAINA CANONICAL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE NAVAGRAHAS OR JYOTISHKA DEVAS.

No.	Region	Jyotishka Deva	Vahana (vehicle)	Svetambara Attributes.	Digambara Attributes
1	East	Surya (Sun)	Chariot drawn by seven horses	Holding two lotuses,	*
2	South-east	Sukra (Venus)	Snake (s)	Holding an urn.	Holding : a three fold thread, snake. noose and rosary.
3	South	Mangala (Mars)	Earth	Holding : shovel. Varada, spear. trident, and club.	Holding a spear only.
4	South-west	Rahu	Lion (s)	Bearing an axe.	Having the symbol of a flag.
5	West	Sani (Saturn)	Tortoise (s)	Bearing an axe.	Having a three fold thread.
6	North-west	Chandra (Moon)	Chariot drawn by ten horses	Holding an urn of nectar.	*
7	North	Budha (Mercury)	Swan (s) Lion (s)	Holding : book, sword. shield club and Varada.	Holding a book only.
8	North-east	Brihaspati (Jupiter)	Swan (s) Lotus (D)	Bearing : book. rosary. staff. Kamandulu, and Varada,	Holding : book, Kamandulu and rosary.
9	No region to rule over	Ketu	Cobra (s)	Bearing a cobra.	*

(s) In accordance with the Svetambara Scriptures, (D) In conformity to the Digambara Scriptures. * Not yet known.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

THE JAINA CANONICAL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE SRUTA-DEVI (SARASWATI) AND THE SIXTEEN VIDYA-DEVIS.

[Sruta Devi (goddess of Sruti) or Saraswati is believed to be at the head of all the sixteen Vidyadevis, and her worship is prior to that of her subordinate deities The Jainas make a special ceremony of her worship on the Shukla Panchami day of the Kartika month, which they call "Jnana Panchami."]

No.	Goddess	Vahana (Vehicle)	Svetambara Attributes.	Digambara Attributes.
	Sruta Devi or Saraswati	Swan (S) Peacock (D)	Four hands. Bearing: lotus, (Varada or lute), Book, and rosary.	The same as the Svetambara attributes.
1	Rohini	Cow (S)	Holding: conch. rosary, bow, and arrow.	Bearing: urn, conch, lotus, and fruit.
2	Prajnapti	Peacock (S)	Holding: lotus, spear, Varada, citrus.	Bearing: sword and disc.
3	Vajra-Srimkhala	Lotus (S)	Four hands. Carrying: chain. club, Varada, lotus.	Bearing a chain only.
4	Vajramkusa	Elephant (S) Aerial car (D)	Bearing: sword, vajra, shield, spear, Varada, citrus, and goad.	Holding: goad and lute.

(S) In accordance with the Svetambara Scriptures. (D) In conformity to the Digambara Scriptures.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Preservation Foundation, Chandigarh

5	Apratichakra (s) or Jambunada (D)	Garuda (s) Peacock (D)	Four arms holding discs only.	Bearing : sword and spear.
6	Purusadatta	Buffalo (s) Peacock (D)	Holding : sword, shield, Varada, and citrus.	Holding : vajra and lotus.
7	Kali	Deer (D) Lotus (s)	When two armed she holds varada and a club. When four handed she is equipped with rosary, club, vajra, and Abhaya-mudra.	Hand furnished with : sword and a staff.
8	Mahakali	Man (s) Corpse (D)	Holding : { rosary, fruit, bell, and Varada or rosary, vajra, bell, and Abhaya.	Bearing : bow, sword, fruit, and weapon.
9	Gauri	Alligator (s) (D)	Four hands, equipped with : varada, club, rosary. and water lily.	Holding lotus.
10	Gandhari	Lotus (s) Tortoise (D)	Holding : staff, vajra, varada, and Abhaya-mudra.	Holding : sword and a disc.
11	Mahajvala or Jvalamalini	Cat (s) Boar (s) Buffalo (D)	Holding many weapons.	Bearing : bow, shield, sword, and disc.
12	Manavi	Lotus (s) Boar (D)	Four hands. Holding : Varada, rosary, and a bough of a tree.	Bearing a trident.

(s) In accordance with the Svetambara Scriptures. (D) In conformity to the Digambara Scriptures.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Contd.—

31	Vairoti	Snake (s) Lion (D)	Carrying : sword, snake, and shield.	Holding a snake.
14	Achyupta	Horse (s) (D)	Holding : bow, sword, shield, and arrow.	Holding a sword.
15	Manasi	Swan (s) Lion (s) Snake (D)	Four hands. Bearing : Varada, vajra, rosary, etc.	*
16	Mahamanasi	Lion (s) Swan (D)	Bearing : Varada, sword, kamandalu, and lance.	Holding : rosary, Varada-mudra, goad and garland.

THE JAINA CANONICAL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE DIKPALAS OR LOKAPALAS OR VASTU-DEVATAS.

[The Dikpalas or Lokapalas or Vastu-Devatas, in accrodance with the Jaina conviction, guard the quarters (Dik). They are always subservient to the Tirthamkaras. The iconography of the ten Dikpalas is recognized by the Svetambaras, The Digambaras accept only the first eight guardian deities, Brahma and Naga being left out of their list.]

Nos.	Quarters (Dik)	Dikpalas	Vehicle (Vahana)	Svetambara Attributes	Digambara Attributes
1.	East	Indra	Elephant (s) (D)	Holding : vajra or thunderbolt.	Holding : Vajra or thunderbolt.
2	South-east	Agni	Ram (s) (D)	Holding : spear, seven flames, bow and arrow.	Bearing : spear, seven flames, sacrificial pot.

(s) In acccordance with the Svetambara Scriptures. (D) In conformity to the Digambara Scriptures. * Not yet known.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Contd.—

3	South	Yama	Buffalo (s) (D)	Holding a staff.	Holding a staff.
4	South-west	Nairita	Goblin (s) Bear (D)	Wearing a tiger's skin, Holding : club, sword, and bow (Pinaka)	Holding a club.
5	West	Varuna	Dolphin (D) (s) Fish (s)	Bearing a noose and figuratively wearing the ocean.	Bedecked in pearls, corals, and bearing a noose.
6	North-west	Vayu	Deer (s) (D)	Having vajra and a banner.	Having a wooden weapon.
7	North	Kubera	Man (s) Chariot (D)	Bearing gems and a club.	Having either two or four arms. Riding the chariot known as 'Pushpaka'.
8	North-east	Isan	Bull (s) (D)	Holding : bow trident, and snakes.	Holding : bow, trident, snakes, and skull.
9	Upper Region	Brahma	Swan (s)	Four headed. Holding : book and lotus.	*Nil*
10	Nether Region (Patala)	Naga	Lotus (s)	Holding a snake in his hand.	*Nil*

(s) In accordance with the Svetambara Scriptures.

(D) In conformity to the Digambara Scriptures.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

THE JAINA CANONICAL REPRESENTATIONS OF SOME ISOLATED DIVINITIES.

No.	Divinities	Vahana	Svetambara Attributes	Digambara Attributes
1	Harinegamesi or Naigamesha. [Grants the boon of child birth].	*	Having a goat's head.	*
2	Ksetrapala (Protects the ksetra or field).	Dog (s)	Matted hair. Having snake as his sacred thread. Twenty hands equipped with weapons. When, six handed, he holds a club, noose, damaru, bow, goad, and Gedika.	*
3	Ganesha or Chuhanatha	Mouse (s)	The number of hands vary from two, four, six, nine, eighteen, to one hundred and eight. Holding: axe, Varada, Modaka, and Abhaya, etc.	*
4	Sri or Lakshmi (Goddess of wealth)	Elephant (s)	Holding lotuses.	Four hands. Holding flower and lotus
5	Santi Devi	Lotus (s)	Four hands. Bearing: Varada, rosary, Kamandulu, and a pitcher.	*

(s) In accordance with the Svetambara Scriptures.

* Not yet known.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

SIGNIFICANCE OF ANCIENT AND MEDIAEVAL INDIAN SCULPTURES

Ancient and Mediaeval Indian Sculptures have borne upon them the speeches and the thoughts of men of the ages that are no more. While studying their changing forms and outward shapes we must always remember that importance lies also in the wealth of ideas they are waiting to convey to us, in the fleet of thoughts, emotions, and knowledge that would never have been ours but for that great stream of chiselled reliefs which has been flowing steadily ever since the dawn of man's mind. Sculpture is another form of literature, a medium of companionship with the thoughts of others. It has a greater advantage than the apparatus of Philology. The philological literature is intelligible to people in other lands generally through translations, and there is no doubt that much of its excellence is lost through such renderings. But the forms of expression in sculptures do not need such transformations for their appreciation. They are enjoyed in the original in all lands by all people. Literature cannot come to the people, but people should come to literature or leave it alone. But there is no royal road to appreciate a work of sculpture. It is a universal language and has an appeal for all. Even the lowest levels of the illiterate millions of the masses, can pick up and absorb a large dose of knowledge through the gateways of their eyes.

Evolution of Man:—Looked at from the cosmographical point of view, ancient and mediaeval Indian sculptures represent the evolution of man from the lowest to the highest. The animals and infernal beings typify men at their worst while gods and things celestial typify men and things human at their best.

Costumes, Ornaments and Fashion:—Occasionally the whole of the exterior, as well as the interior of the Caves, railings and toanas of stupas, are covered with relievos, representing processions, buildings, feasts, funerals, and endless illustrations of the life, manners and customs of the ancient and mediæval Indian people. The Indian sculptors always dressed their figures in the garb ordinarily worn by their contemporary brethren. We have no reason to admit that both male and female costumes in India to day, have undergone very notable changes. The custom of wearing the costume below the navel was universal among both males and females. It is inconceivable that sewn garments like bodices or jackets were not

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

in use. In a few examples, the bodice is observed as a tight fitting garment with short arms ending in fringes, and stopping midway between the breasts and the navel. The 'uttariya' covers the left breast completely and the right breast only partially. In figures representing action, the breasts are restrained by a knot. The uttariya was used by both males and females. How the ladies of those old days did their hair dress can be studied from the interesting chignon on the heads of the female figures. A round flat chignon at the back of the head appears to have been the most favourite fashion. Both male and female figures of the mediaeval period were represented heavily ornamented. It would appear from a comparative study that the ancient pieces of sculpture are distinctly less ornamened than the mediaeval productions in which profuse ornamentation became the rule. Ear lobes pierced and weighted down with ornaments was the universal rule among both males and females in mediaeval period. The usual ornaments for the ears of the ladies were circular pendants of large size. In the case of males, the style was the same but of a smaller size. No nose ornament whatsoever, is found in the female figures. Probably the Indians of those days had the sense to leave this beautiful limb, the equipoise of the face, unbattered. Necklaces worn by the male and female figures are interesting studies. Armlets, bracelets and anklets were common to both female and male figures. The bracelets worn by males as a rule, are found to be thinner than those worn by ladies.

Marriageable age of girls:—In the Vaivahika images of Shiva and Parvati, the marriageable age of girls finds a curious, confirmation in the developed but still immature bust and figure of the bride.

Domestic articles:—The shape of some domestic articles as found sculptured on images, reliefs, etc., is worthy to be noticed. They are pitchers, fan, umbrella, caskets, baskets, weapons, musical instruments, etc.

Conclusion—Man's ascent from animal-like dependence upon nature was inextricably tangled with the dawn of religious thought and activity. Every thought, word and deed, thenceforth, belongs to the world of the unseen as well as of the seen; every article that is made in India thenceforward is for direct religious use, or has some religious significance. Ancient and mediaeval Indian sculptures illustrate the religious life of the Indians. The primitive pre-Vedic Aryans owing to their living amidst the many terrors and surprises of dense dark forests, worshipped the ghosts, with the feeling of fear and wonderment which finds more frequent expression in their sculptures. As

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

the view of Nature expanded, there dawned the glimpse of a higher religion upon the intellect of the Vedic Aryans. And it is because in ancient and mediæval India, Religion and Art were inseparabably linked together, that all changes in religious consciousness affected the expressions in sculptures. Similarly whenever sculptural forms changed they implied a corresponding modification in faith. The images reveal not only the essence of the worshipper's own personality but that of the nation and the period to which he belonged. Ancient and mediaeval sculptures, therefore, do not need to be justified by the anatomist or by any other scientific specialist; every convention in them is justified and easily intelligible when it is read in the light of Indian religious philosophy of that period. The ideal of the divine figure, expressing spiritual instead of physical strength, was an ideal common to all schools of religious thought e, g., Jain, Buddhist, and Brahmanical. The Jainas adapted it to their Tirthamkaras, the Mahayanists to their Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and the orthodox Saivites and Vaishnavas to the divinities of their own pantheon. The geographical limit of the circulation of sculptures is a very interesting and sure index to the faiths of the people. The images in stone, though disfigured, can never be lost unless pounded to atoms. The worshippers disappeared, but the images worshipped by them and thrown into the nearest tank or ditch on mutilation or apprehended Muslim invasion, now turn up from time to time. The life in ancient and mediaeval India is unfolded in the contemporary sculptures. Nothing was forgotten to be represented, neither life at court nor existence in town, in the country or in the hermitages. They are great instruments of education and apparatus of studies. The Indian Archaeological Museums are worthy treasure-houses and temples to which ardent students and worshippers of Indian Art, culture, and Civilisation should flock with their devotions and offerings. Assiduous and scientific studies to various phases of Indian sculptures will transport them from the world of materialism to a world of spiritual exhaltation.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

PICTORIAL ART IN ANCIENT AND MEDIAEVAL INDIA

In the evolution of Indian Art, the services of the potter, the carpenter, the sculptor, the smith, and the painter were indispensable. There can be no difference of opinion on theorising that they followed one after another in the history of Indian Art, The art of working in terracotta (baked clay) was widely practised from very early times. Beginning from the ancient sites of Monenjo Daro and Harappa down to the layers of the Gupta epochs, terracottas are of great importance as documents of Indian culture. The beginning of wood carving was previous to the Vedic epoch. But though in this perishable material no monuments of that early period actually survive, yet we can gather a clear idea of style from the oldest constructions in stone which testify to the previous existence of of wooden buildings. The technique of the Barhut reliefs suggests that they were the work of skilled wood carvers. Both the forms of construction and the technique of the Barhut rail are frankly imitations of wooden proto-types. The stone gates at Sanchi are copied from wooden ones, the general construction as well as the details show this most clearly. It is a fact that will receive fresh proofs every day that in India stone sculpture owed its origin to wood carving, that is, the Indian sculptors introduced on stone the same process that had previously been executed on wood. Specimens of early Indian sculpture that have survived, are generally, in bas-reliefs. They are lavished chiefly on the vestibules and the doors. In the course of time, Indian sculptures attained the stage of round forms and it was due to the Objective Indian Artists who paid greater attention to the technique in order to make the images realistic and life-like. It is very reasonable to infer that the iron workers were the direct successors of the lithic workers. The discovery of iron was soon followed by the discovery of gold, silver, and copper. Before they arose in Northern India, Tamil was able from its own resources, to invent names for the four metals: iron was called irrumbu, copper called sembu, silver known as velli, and gold got several names such as pon, tangam, etc.

Now, we can understand how the Indian Artists were able to turn from one material to another without much difficulty and to work with equal success as potters, wood-carvers, sculptors and

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

smiths. The secret of the gradation is to be found, I believe, in the desire of Indian Artists to produce something which would outlive themselves. The notion of permanence superadded to their growing delight in the acquisition of mechanical skill, led them to deal with enduring materials. This view gets full support from the singular fact that earliest date at which we can find records, the execution has been progressing to works in the harder possible materials. But we must not forget that clay modelling, wood carving, sculpture and metal work in India are so closely associated that they cannot be placed in self contained compartments. Whether on clay, wood, stone, or metal, figures were usually represented in the same conventional manner. Indian Artists in one medium were not lacking in skill in others. The same Artist generally possessed himself a knowledge of working on different materials and there was not much difference in the general appearance of his works. We know from an explicit inscription that it was the ivory workers of Vidisa who carved in the immediate vicinity of their town, one of the monumental gates of Sanchi.

In the evolution of Indian Art the transition from the stable and permanent materials to the transient and mobile ones (e.g., wall, paper), must not be taken by us as a surprise. It was in absolute agreement with the development of the Indian conception of God. The difference took place in material but not in the ideal. The materials changed but the ideal or aim remained the same, Even in technique there was not much difference between an early Indian bas-relief and a frescoe. The same form of representation which owing to the shallowness of the relief and near to the eye is perceived to be a bas-relief, assumes the semblance of a picture from a distance.

Painting was one of the sixty-four 'Kalas' or fine arts practised in Ancient India. Incidental references to painting are found an ancient Indian literatures. The Vinayaka Pithaka, a Pali Buddhist work, dating from the third or fourth century B. C., makes several references to the pleasure houses of King Pasenada, containing chittagara or picture-halls. Painted halls are also described in the epic of the Ramayana which is acknowledged to be of great antiquity. The most detailed early literary reference to painting is found in the Pali Ummaga Jataka. Allusions to portraits are frequent in the dramas of Kalidasa. In his play the heroine Queen Dharini carefully keeps her attractive handmaid Malavika from the presence of the King Agnimitra, but foolishly caused Malavika's

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

portrait to be painted on the walls of the chitra-sala. In his 'Shakuntala' Kalidasa depicts King Dusyanta half demented with grief and remorse for his desertion of Shakuntala and consoling himself with a painted portrait of her. Bhavabhuti the great dramatist of the sixth century A. D.. in his 'Uttara Rama Charita' represented Rama and Sita as viewing newly executed paintings of scenes from their own life. The Ceylonese chronicle namely the Mahavamsa tells us of the mural painting, decorating the relic chamber of the Ruwanwali dagaba about 150 B. C. In the Nagamanda a drama (attributed to king Harsha of Kanauj), a hero or prince of the Vidhyadharas whiles away his time by drawing the portrait of his beloved, Malayavati. The Chinese pilgrims noticed several examples of celestial Buddhistic pictures in the 5th, 6th and 7th centuries A.D. In the Vishnu-dharmottaram, Shilpa-ratnam, and Chitra-laksanam, we get a few chapters dealing with science of painting. In the Chitra-laksanam there is a story about the origin of portrait-painting. The substance of the story is that Broahma the god taught the King Nagnajit how to bring back to life the dead son of a Brahman, by executing a portrait of the deceased, which was endowed with life by Broahma and thus made an efficient substitute for the dead youth whom Yama refused to give up. The Vishnu-dharmottaram tells us another story regarding the origin of painting: 'The two sages Nara and Narayana were engaged in penance at their hermitage of Vadari. The Apsaras came to cause hinderance to their penances. Narayana easily discerned their purpose. He painted an auspicious nymph Urvasi with charming limbs, on seeing which, all the Apsaras went away in shame. Another story of the Epic age relates that the Princess Usha dreamt that a beautiful youth appeared to her and was a companion in her walks abroad. She confided this to one of her maids of honour namely Chitralekha, who relieved her anxiety by painting the portraits of all the deities and great men of the time. As soon as Usha saw the likeness of Aniruddha, the grandson of Krishna, the youth of her vision was revealed to her. Vatsyayana's Kamasutra makes mention of the drawing panels, paints, and brushes as parts of the ordinary furniture of a nagarika's (citizen's) chamber. Taranath the Tibetan historian, in his account of Buddhism, ascribed the most ancient pictures to the gods and declared that they were so marvellous as to bewilder beholders by their realism.

The pictorial and plastic representations developed side by side in ancient India. The beginning of painting was, no doubt, prior to the origin of writing and pictorial forms have apparently

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

constituted some of the most ancient alphabets of primeval forms of speech. It is quite evident from the literary evidences that painting was not exclusively ecclesiastical, but also secular, practised by amateurs. It was a social accomplishment, at least among princes and ladies of the court. Portraiture from memory-image was the earliest and most popular form of painting in ancient India.

Indian Pictorial Art does not begin with the Buddhist frescoes at Ajanta and Bagh. These wonderful frescoes or wall-pictures emerged too fully matured to be regarded as the first stages of Indian painting. Long before, the Indian painter perfected his style of work. Looking at each of the Barhut panels and viewing them all in succession, one is apt to feel as though the pictures have been drawn on stone instead of on canvas. Pata-chitras or scroll pictures were built up in India at the time of the rise of Buddhism, and were known as charana-chitra or rambling pictures, rambling in the sense that the religious teachers used to wander about in the country, instructing the people by means thereof. The tradition of this ancient pictorial art has been maintained in the Buddhistic bas-reliefs and frescoes, so far as their method and technique are concerned. In the Gandhara sculptures, the pictorial element is so strongly in evidence that one may conjecture that the same tradition reached Gandhara. The extreme offshoot of the tradition is represented to some extent in the Tibetan ecclesiastical painting. As a consequence, painting predominated in India when the plastic art proportionately declined. In the eighth century, when Muhammad Ibn Kasim conquered Sindh, a contemporary chronicler relates that a deputation of the Hindus came to ask if they might paint portraits of the Arab leader and some of his officers. This reference emphises that portraiture was a special feature of Indian Art at that time. In the fourteenth century Firoz Shah Tughlak, one of the most enlightened and tolerant Musalman rulers in India, showed a marked antipathy to painting. While he encouraged architecture as buildings erected during his reign amply testify, he deliberately destroyed Indian paintings consisting of figures of pagan saints. Nicolo Conti, a Venetian traveller who visited India in the early part of the 15th century, specially noted that all over the country he found temples the interiors of which were painted with figures of different kinds. And when the first Portuguese expedition to reach India landed in 1·98 A. D., Vascoda Gama and his men actually worshipped in a Hindu temple near Calicut, which was decorated with frescoes of the saints.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

LEGACIES OF ANCIENT AND MEDIAEVAL INDIAN PAINTING

Owing partly to the destructive influence of a tropical climate on materials ordinarily much less durable than stone or metal, and partly to the greater facilities which they themselves offered to the destructive propensities of the Vandals and Philistines, the existing records of Indian paintings of ancient and mediaeval periods are much fewer than those of plastic art.

PALAEOLITHIC DRAWINGS

There are primitive records of hunting scenes crudely drawn on the walls of a group of caves in the Kaimur Range. On the sandstone rock at the mouth of a series of caves in the hills immediately east of the Mand river, near the village of Singhanpur, are a number of rude drawings, in a red pigment, which may be of very remote antiquity. These drawings depict human beings and animals viz., a stag, an elephant, a hare etc. Hunting scenes are graphically portrayed. In the Mirzapur district (U. P.) there are a number of caves bearing traces of haematite drawings of a highly interesting nature. As usual hunting scenes are the principal subjects, and the wild animals are most realistically rendered. But we must remember that these palaeolithic drawings are remote from being included in the category of Indian Art.

JOGIMARA CAVE PAINTINGS

There was a hiatus of probably hundreds of years between those apparently dateless specimens of the palaeolithic period and the dateable paintings found on the walls of the Jogimara Cave of the Ramgarh Hill in Sirguja State. Dr. Bloch assigned the frescoes to the third century B. C., on the basis of a short contemporary inscription in Brahmi character. The style is contemporary with that of Sanchi and Barhut sculptures. The figures include: a male figure seated under a tree with dancing girls and musicians; a procession on elephant; sundry geometrical ornaments; indistinct traces of flowers, trees, animals and nude human figures; a house with the chaitya window; a chariot drawn by three horses and surmounted by an umbrella; rows of fish, makaras, and other acquatic monsters.

AJANTA FRESCOES

Ajanta is a place of almost absolute seclusion, where hidden away in their rock-cut retreat, the Indian Artists produced their

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

paintings oblivious of the tide of political conditions which ebbed and flowed in the country around them. The walls, columns, and ceilings of the Ajanta Caves were once covered with paintings of which a large part has been preserved. It is especially on account of these frescoes that Ajanta has been famous in the history of Indian Pictorial Art. The technical excellence of the frescoes can fairly attest that the merit ascribed to them by a number of writers is not overrated. The celebrated frescoes of Ajanta Caves range in date from about A. D. 50 to 630 A. D., a period extending over six centuries. Out of twenty-nine excavations forming the complete series of caves at Ajanta, only sixteen of them are recorded in 1879 A,D,. as containing paintings in a greater or lesser degree. But in recent years the ravages of time and other vicissitudes have been so marked that in 1910 A. D., frescoes are found in only six out of the sixteen caves originally embellished in the same way. These six caves are Nos, 1, 2, 9, 10, 16, and 17, and they may be dated as under :—

Caves IX and X——————150 B. C.—350 A. D.

Caves XVI and XVII——500 A. D.—600 A. D.

Caves I and II————600 A. D.—650 A. D.

The frescoes in Caves IX and X represent no primitive beginning, but an advanced state of development. Some of them are so closely related to the Sanchi sculptures that they may be referred to approximately the same age. The style of drapery in Cave X brings to mind the sculptures of Mathura and Gandhara. The bulk of the paintings in Caves I and II are assigned to the time of the Chalukya Kings. The Vakataka inscription in Cave XVI suggests the patronage of the earlier Vakataka Kings of Berar.

Pre-Vedic Elements—The Nagas or snake-demons are usually portrayed in human shape with a hood of snake. In Cave I there is a fine composition of a Naga sovereign and his queen conversing happily together. The treatment of two bulls fighting (Cave I) and elephants in Cave X, prove the painters' knowledge of animal forms. Cave I contains some Madhupana Drishya (Bacchanalian scenes).

Buddhistic Scenes—The nimbus and draperies of the Buddha figures in Cave X recall the Gandhara style. Cave XVII contains sixty-one distinct scenes excessively crowned with figures including the Buddhist Wheel of Life. Cave XIX includes effigies of Buddha and rich floriated patterns. The temptation of Buddha in Cave I, and 'Mother and Child' in Cave XVII are very much attractive.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

The Buddha triad in Cave XVI and the Wheel, 'the Seven Buddhas,' 'Return to Kapilavastu,' Abhiseka scenes, Vesantara and Nalagiri Jatakas in Cave XVII are noteworthy. The Cave II includes great miracle at Sravasti, Indra-loka scenes, Kantivadin and Maitribala Jatakas and decorative panels on ceiling. All the Buddhistic scenes show the influence of the Mahayana Buddhism, Buddha is represented either standing or seated with various mudras.

Historical Scenes—The landing of Vijaya in Ceylon (Cave XVII) and the representation of the Persian embassy to Pulakesin II (Cave I) are notable historical scenes. A procession of men on foot, on horseback, variously armed and a Raja in the midst of eight female attendants, is unusually well composed in the Cave X.

Secular Scenes—A pair of lovers is admirably drawn in the Cave I. The somewhat similar picture outside the Cave XVII where two bright eyed girls peep through a lattice at the sequestered lovers, is drawn with a light heart.

Characteristics—The chief characteristic of the Ajanta frescoes lies in the adaptation of line. The treatment of the line is so subtle and experienced that by its varying quality and sympathetic utterance it embodies modelling, values, relief, foreshortening and all other essential elements of Painting. The pigments most freely used are white, red, brown, a dull green, and blue. 'As a whole except for some of the earlier paintings in the Cave IX, the general process of the Ajanta Artists was to represent their group of figures as light mass against a darker background. They were well aware of the importance of attracting to the features of their subjects and they unobtrusively obtained the desired result by the use of an emphatic black in the hair, thus framing the face, a plan which adds not a little to the animated character of some of the figures.' Everywhere at Ajanta, 'Woman' is the finest achievement and obviously most admired theme. 'The Ajanta Artists treated women like flowers. Garlands of girls surround the Rajas and the princes, embellish the palaces, dominate the street scenes, and crowd the windows of the houses. They painted 'Woman' at the toilet, in repose, gossiping, sitting and standing. They reproduced every turn of her head, every curve of her form, every glance of her eye. Everywhere the Woman is beheld like the full-blown rose in its pride and perfume—nowhere like the trampled lily.' While judging the Ajanta frescoes, the students of Indian Art should look at the mass from a distance, and not in minute detail. Small

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

reproductions cannot possibly give a just idea of the effects aimed at by the Artists. Paintings generally obey two possibilities, they treat the ground as surface and exist within its two dimensions. But the Ajanta frescoes create, in one way or another, an illusion of leading into depth. They do not lead away but they come forth.

BAGH PAINTINGS

The Bagh Caves are situated in Malwa. They are but a hundred and fifty miles from Ajanta; the river Narmada runs between them. The principal group of caves contains eight excavations, the largest being 94 feet square. Smaller remnants of painting may be still discerned in two other caves. The frescoes at Bagh bear a striking resemblance in style to the later frescoes of Ajanta and cannot differ much from them in age. The judge's wig worn by many of the male figures connect the figures with the later Gupta period. The subjects are not entirely of a religious order, the majority of them being of a secular nature, include a stately procession of horsemen and elephant riders etc. The few preserved fragments of the mural painting must have been of great beauty.

ELLORA PAINTINGS

Topics belonging to the three different religions are represented here. The southern group comprising fourteen caves contain Buddhistic subjects, the middle ones belong to Brahmanism, and the northern most are attributed to Jainism. The figures of the Bodhisaktis are the most notable elements.

NASIK PAINTINGS

The Brahmanical Hindus connect the Nasik caves with the five Pandavas of the Mahabharata. But there cannot be the slightest doubt as to their connexion with Buddhism as well.

AURANGABAD PAINTINGS

With the exception of one dilapidated chaitya temple of a primitive type, the Aurangabad caves seem to belong to the same period as that of the later caves at Ajanta. At Aurangabad too, we find many figures of the Bodhisaktis.

ELEPHANTA PAINTINGS

The island of Elephanta is situated about seven miles north-east of the Apollo Bandar. The caves may be divided into three classes according to the sects to which they belong namely Jaina, Buddhist, and Brahmanical. For the early history of Elephanta we have to depend on local traditions, but they are of little or no

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

historical value. The island formed part of the vast western empire of Asoka. Whether it remained under the uninterrupted sway of the Mauryas even after the break up of the Mauryan Empire, it is impossible to affirm with definiteness. In 634-35 A. D., Pulakesin II Chalukya annexed it. From the Chalukyas it went to the Rashtrakutas and thereafter to the Chalukyas of Kalyani in the reign of Taila II, and from them to the Yadavas. In 1294 A. D., when Alauddin Khilji overthrew the Yadavas, the island must have fallen into his hands. The Main Cave of Elephanta and its adjuncts were originally decorated with paintings. The ceiling of the Main Cave still preserves traces of the original painting, the description of which is supplied by the Portuguese and other eye witnesses of the 17th and 18th centuries.

PALA PALM-LEAVES

The only surviving documents of the 11th century are the illustrations in the two palm leaves of Astasahasrika-prajnaparamita Pancharaksa. All the illustrations represent Buddhist divinities or scenes from the life of Buddha. Their general character is 'Tantrik'.

GUJERATI PAINTINGS

Almost all the Gujerati works are illustrations of the Jaina texts and in almost all cases of the Kalpa Sutra, a work dealing with the life of Mahavira and certain other Tirthamkaras and another poem, the Kali Kacarya Katha.

TIRUMALAI PAINTINGS

The remains of a set of wall and ceiling paintings at Tirumalai, ascribed on the evidence of inscriptions to the 11th century. The nave of a wheel is occupied by a Jaina saint. The wheel is divided into twelve compartments, each filled by a crowd of worshippers, mostly men. One of the compartments contains twelve robed nuns. Another compartment is occupied by oxen, elephants and leopards adoring the Lord.

KANCHI PAINTINGS

Two old Brahmanical temples namely Kamakshi Amman and Vamtharaja Perumal at Conjeevram or Kanchi, are decorated with geometrical patterns, neat floral devices, and a male archer mounted on an elephant.

TRIVANDRUM PAINTINGS

The temple wall-paintings at Trivandrum deal with the subjects from the Epics.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

NEPAL PALM-LEAVES

The palm leaves of Nepal contain : miniatures of the the Astasahasrika-prajnaparamita, four episodes of the Vessantara Jataka, a banner illustrating the Kapisa and Pindapatra Avadanas, and the Gajendra moksha.

BURMA FRESCOES.

The Jataka paintings of the Kubezatpaya consisting of small square panels, belong to the 11th and 12th centuries. Frescoes are also found in the Nandamannya pagoda. The Payathonzu triple temple at Minnanthu near Pagan, illustrates highly erotic frescoes.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

THE SHILPA SHASTRAS

The Indian Artist of the ancient and early mediaeval periods was a friend and brother to the saint, the holy man. The saint and the artist both were disinterested and their disinterestedness was their common ground. Indian religions shorn of all its sectarian associations mean simply the experiencing of the highest truth. And the Indian Artist too seeks to express whether through subjcetive or objective way, his realisation of the Infinite. In ancient and early mediaeval periods the Indian Artist was independent to bring the inspiration and the fecundation of the soul to the making of sacred representations. But then gradually grew up a stage when Indian Art became the handmaid of religion and the Artist became a servant of an organisation. Art became an affair which meant nothing more than things made in accordance with the requirements of this or that religious organisation. Artists became mere instruments whose freewill was denied and consequently their work was deprived of gaiety, the mark of holiness. Their early predecessors were moved by spiritual enthusiasm and were convinced that their works of art would bring salvation to them. But now they are transferred from their spontaneous and direct divine service to the service of the private patrons. This transition in the history of Indian Art took place about the late mediæval period. The independent spirit of the Indian Artist was still struggling to find definite artistic expression in their sculptures and paintings, but it was used as a vehicle by the Brahman priests. The materials of which different articles were to be fashioned, their weight and colours were fixed by the Brahman priests. In representing the human figures or the images of gods, the artist was checked by laws imposed by the priesthood who prescribed certain proportions and attitudes as only proper. We notice the restrictions manifested in their work which were shaped by the psychology of the priests. In the late mediæval period the Brahman priests were the great conservers of learning and letters. Their influence attempted in removing the individuality of an artist who had to sink his oddities in the pool of conformity.

The Shilpa Shastras preserve the codes or rules which the Indian Artists of the mediæval period had to follow and made to believe as revelations from intuition. The Shilpa Shastras are

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

treatises on architecture, sculpture, painting, etc. There appears to have been according to some, thirty two and in the opinion of others, sixty-four treatises or Shilpa Shastras, but unfortnuately few traces, of them survive at present. The Shilpa Shastras prevailing at the present day may be grouped under three heads ;—

1. Vastu-Vidya (Science of Architectuce) .
2. Vashkara-Vidya (Science of Sculpture) .
3. Chitra-Vidya (Science of Painting) .

Treatises dealing on Vashkara-Vidya and Chitra-Vidya are the Brahatsamhita, Sukraniti, Vishnu-dharmottara-puranam, Matsya-puranam, Agni-puranam, Mayavastu, Pratimamana-laksanam, etc. Some fragmentary remains of the treatises entitled Mansara, Mayamata, Casyapa, Vayaghanasa, Secaladhicara, Sanatkumara Pancharatram and others are still occasionally, though rarely to be met with in Southern India. They are invariably mutilated in many important portions.

Admonitions:

The resort to a living model accessible to observation is prohibited in the Shilpa Shastras because its appeal is merely sensational and affecting and our reaction is either of pleasure or pain and not disinterested. The representation of natural object is admonished as it is merely a substitute in the absence of the object or as a means of consolation in longing and our attachment to the work is strictly speaking a fetishism or idolatry or worship of nature. The artist should represent the gods and not men because doing the latter, though pleasing yet does not lead the way to heaven. Even a misshapen image of a god, says Sukracharya, is to be preferred to an image of a human being, howsoever charming. Not only are images of men condemned, but originality, the expression of personal sentiment, are equally forbidden. A person to whom the somewhat misshapen image of a god makes no appeal is not an artist, but the sentimentalist who looks upon the sensuous gratifications. The canons of the Shilpa Shastras forbid, natural anatomical proportions and tabulate the proportions of an ideal figure. There are nine kinds of rasa or sentiments :—Sringara (erotic), Hasya (laughing), Karuna (pathetic), Vira (heroic), Rudra (furious), Bhayanak (fearful), Bhibhatsa (loathsome), Adbhuta (strange), Santa (peaceful). Pictures representing all the nine kinds of sentiments or rasas may be kept in the palace of a king. But pictures to embellish homes should belong to the Srinagara, Hasya, Santa

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Preservation Foundation, Chandigarh

rasas only. The rest must not decorate the house of an ordinary person.

Idea of Beauty

The Sukraniti, Brahatsamhita, Mayasastra, and Pratimamana-laksanam, all enunciate that an image made according to their rules is beautiful, no other image is beautiful. Beauty, they hold, is subjective only, and is not inherent in natural form or matter. It belongs only to spirit, and can only be apprenended by spiritual vision. The 'Beauty Marks.' have been enumerated by them, such as the navel low in the body, eyes like a lotus petal, face like the full moon, the lines on the neck resembling that on the conch-shell, etc.

Images

The Vishnudharmottara-puranam holds that in this mighty world men hanker for dharma, artha, kama, and moksha. The mighty gods would bestow upon them if they are properly worshipped and propitiated. The Matsya-puranam says that worshipping gods and singing their praise, will bring salvation to men. To worship gods, one must have their images prepared. In accordance with the Pratima-mana-lakshanam the excellences of the images must consist of the following characteristics :— The seat should be well fixed and of sufficient length and breadth ; head should be made like an umbrella ; arms to be made like the trunk of an elephant; body must be in the lion posture, etc. Sukracharya says that images, which satisfy the heart of certain individuals only, cannot be called beautiful. The measurements of pratimas in general are given in the Brahatsamhita, Vishnudharmottara-puranam, Sukraniti, Matsyapuranam, Agnipura-nam Mayasastram, and Pratima-mana-lakshanam. Measurements are often in the unit of an anguli. Images which accord with those proportions are truly lovely none other, forsooth ! The materials for images sanctioned by the Shilpa Shastras are wood, clay, jewel, gold, silver, copper, and stone. They also speak of the inherent qualities of those metals. On the hands of the images there should be auspicious marks such as Sankha (conch), Padma (lotus), Dhawaja (flag) Vajra (thunderbolt), Chakra (wheel), Swastika, Kalasa (pitcher), Ankusa (hook), Srivatsa, Trisula (trident), Yava mala (barley-garland), and Vasudha. We know of the ornaments for decoration from Bharata's Natyasastra. In the Pratima-mana lakshanam and other books we get the rules regarding the decoration of images.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

In accordance with the Vishnu-dharmottaram, all paintings must have eight qualities: proper position, proportion, spacing, gracefulness, articulation, resemblance, decrease and increase. Yosodhara the commentator of Vatsyayana's Kamasutra laid down the six limbs or 'sadanga' of Indian painting as follows :—

Qualities of Painting

रूपभेदाः प्रमाणानि भावलावण्य-योजना ।
सादृशं वर्णिकाभेद इति चित्रं षडंगकम् ॥ *

In the Pancadasi we read how a picture on Pata (canvas or board), should be made : We are told of its four stages : Dhauta (how to wash), Ghattita (how to rub with rice), Lanjchita (how to decorate with ink), and Ranjita (how to colour).

Classes of Painting

In accordance with the Vishnu-dharmottaram there are four classes of painting as under :—

1. *Satyam*—containing the essential reality behind nature of which the universe is merely the appearance.
2. *Vainika*—displaying postures.
3. *Nagara*—secular or erotic.
4. *Misra*—mixed.

Colours

The distinction between form and colour is an unreal one, as we cannot conceive a colourless line or a colourless space. In accordance with the Vishnu-Dharmottaram, the primary colours are of five kinds namely, Sveta (white), Pita (yellow), Rakta (red), Neela (blue), and Krishna (black). Markhandeya and Bharata speak of the combination of the primary colours.

Aim of Shilpa Shastras

The canonical rules of the Shilpa Shastras were compiled in the mediaeval period extending from 650 A. D. to 1100 A. D. The main object of the authors, the Brahmanical priests, was to unite all the Indian Artists against representing the pantheons of other religions e. g., Buddhism and Jainism. They, therefore, first enforced that the Shilpi (artist) should be one who wears a sacred thread, a necklace of sacred beads, and a ring of Kusha-grass upon his finger, one chanting the Vedas, constant in the performance of ceremonial duties etc. That any other than a Shilpi (Brahman) should build the temples, towns, seaports, tanks or wells, is comparable to the sin of murder. But the Objective Indian Artists could not be bound by any such strict

* Rupaveda = distinction of types, forms, and parts. Pramanam = correct knowledge proportion. Bhava = expression of mood or feelings. Lavanya Yojana = infusion of grace or charm. Sadrysam = resemblance to the object as seen through intuition. Varnikaveda = knowledge of different colours.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

rules and regulations. They had their ideas and they tried to give shape and form to those ideas. They allowed their brush or chisel full liberty and tried to develop their Objective Art. The Brahman priests then compiled the canonical rules in order to crush the Objective Artists, The knowledge of artistic technique and tradition as laid down in the Shilpa Shastras was obviously meant for the Subjective Artist who envied the growing popularity of the Objective Artists and therefore sided the priests. As all the Subjective Artists could not inspire themselves with genuine artistic intuition, the Shilpa Shastras guided them in giving the outward form to images and in adding elaborate decorations. The rules and regulations contained in the Shilpa Shastras were supposed to be revelations from heaven. So as to create feudalism in Art the Brahman priests went extreme and permitted no deviation from their canons. The canons of Shilpa Shastras made it possible even for an ordinary Subjective Artist to work within its limits and avoid all danger of the great and sacred subjects being treated with the objective appearance. Finally, the Shilpa Shastras set up some moral injunctions against Objective Art. Such injunctions first tended to discourage the making of human figures. Sukracharya in his 'Sukraniti,' says, "The images of gods yield happiness to men and lead to heaven but those of men lead away from heaven and yield grief. Not only this but the sculptor and the donor both should go away from the path of heaven by having human statues."* The Pratima-mana-laksanam emphasises the same point :

" अशास्त्रेण मुखं कृत्वा यजमानो विनश्यति "

"If the face is not made according to the canons, the Yajamana would be killed," The Mayasastra deals more elaborately,

"प्रतिमा निम्नवदना यदि शिल्पी विनश्यति
चिरं न पूज्यते भर्तुर्विभवं नश्यति ध्रुवम्
नासात्रियवमानादप्यधिका यदि कल्प्यते
शीघ्रमेव हि राजानं निहन्तीति विनिश्चतम् ॥"

"If the face of the image is cast downwards, the artist would be ruined, he would no longer be respected and the wealth of the master would also be lost. If the nose (of the image) measures more than three yavas (barley), it would kill the king soon for certain."

* In my opinion the 'human statues' here, indirectly indicate the images of Buddha. Bodhisattvas and Jaina Tirthamknras.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Conclusion

So the Shilpa Shastras ultimately reduced Art to mere rules of logic or technique, anatomy or perspective, style or fashion. The malicious tendency of the Brahman priests, unfortunately struck at the fountain of inspiration of all the Artists in India. Even the Subjective Artists ultimately found themselves completely at the mercy of the priests. Owing to the shackles of ecclesiastical rules and regulations, they were not free to give unfettered expression to their intuition. They were reduced to the status of artisans or craftsmen. Artists' independence had been sacrificed at the altar of artificial form and outward elaborate decorations. It is nonsense to expect grammar and spelling from a genius to produce an artistic and graceful image. To follow all the Shilpa canons and produce a marvellous image is very difficult and almost impossible. Beauty and grace cannot be imparted to the image by any cut and dried rule. They must come from the soul of the artist. The author of Sukraniti himself realised that the measurements would give only outward form and not grace and beauty to the image. He, therefore, addressed the Spirit of Beauty, "These Lakshanam are not for thee; these laws that I lay down, these analyses of what an image should be, are for those images that are made to order for the people who would worship them. Endless are thy forms! No Shastra can define thee! Nothing can appraise thee!" But he did not modify the canons deliberately; rather he insisted on the strict adherence to the canons. It is not, of course, to be supposed that every Subjective Artist could follow out the canons prescribed for them. The ritual degenrated into a mere formula. The selfish tendencies of the Brahmanical priests of the late mediaeval period had, thus, produced the severest and most injurious effect upon the contemporary Indian sculptures and paintings which appeared a stereotyped repetition of forms in which the highest quality of Indian Art was generally lacking.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX

THE RESULT OF THE BRAHMANICAL TYRANNY

The canons of the Brahmanical Shilpa Shastras struck at the fountain of inspiration of the Indian Artists especially those belonging to the Objective School. The injunction of setting aside one's personal thought in order to see or hear is against the Objective Theory of Indian Art, which considers a conscious expression of the Supreme through the natural forms. When humanity begins to grow weary of servitude, there comes a reaction. A large number of Objective Artists as well as some Subjective ones either feeling the pressure of intoleration or the absolute necessity of patronage travelled far afield in search of sympathy and support. They migrated to exercise their talents freely in Central Asia, Persia, China, Tibet, and Ceylon. Talent often travels far to find the home where it would be most highly appreciated. So it happened that while within the limits of India proper the progress of Objective Indian Art came to a temporary pause, a continuous current of it flowed into the countries far outside the border. The recent discoveries of sculptures and paintings in Chinese Turkistan bear ample testimony to the migration of the Indian Artists during the long period of more than nine hundred years (650 A. D.—1570 A. D.). The result of Stein's and Le Cog's labours have brought to light freseoes showing characteristic traces of Indian Art around Khotan. In the excavations from Dandan Uiliq, similarlity with the Ajanta frescoes is clearly marked. In Chiu-tzu (Tibet) Le Cog has unearthed several painted banners of the eighth century. Their very appearances prove the fact that they were produced by the Indian Artists. The frescoes at Sigiriya in Ceylon denote that they were executed by the direct descendants of the Objective Indian Artists. The huge mass of materials collected is so vast that many years must elapse before the most interesting subject namely the contribution of the Indian Artists to the arts of Persia, China and the Far East can be worked out with more established conclusions. The paintings excavated, are assignable to the 7th and 8th centuries and onwards and so help to clear the continuty of the history of Indian Art between the close of Ajanta series (642 A. D.) and the importation of the descendants of the Objective Indian Artists, in India by Akbar about 1570.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Mr. Griffiths discerned distinct marks of Ajanta's influence on Chinese paintings. The Indian Artists had not only travelled to Turkistan, China and Japan, but as far as Baghdad on the west. In the Abbasid manuscripts we see dark skinned monks in Indian garments, with haloes, posed in the Buddha attitudes, seated in the Arab bazars. There are Indian figures in coloured loin cloths, gold bangles around their wrists, gathered around a shrine and looking as if they had stepped down from the walls of Ajanta itself. "In Central Asia, a number of religious establishments were maintained; some of them were lavishly endowed; monasteries and temples were founded and embellished with the rich mural paintings. Their main interest and characteristic features lie in the fact that they reflect the frescoes of the distant Ajanta." The spade of the excavator has revealed traces all of which show that this comparatively small expanse of country, now swallowed up by desert sand, was the place where the Indian Artists migrated to exercise their talents freely and independent of the admonitions contained in the Shilpa Shastras. Hiuan Tsang's records assert that the then ruling class in Khotan was of Indian origin. The supposed form of Avalokiteswar, squatting on a chequered cushion supported by two white bulls; and a four armed Buddhist saint or Bodhisattva with black beard and whiskers, holding a thunderbolt (vajra) in his left hand, suggest the local forms of the Buddha images. Two sacred or princely personages, one mounted on a pie bald Yarkandi pony and another on a camel, with the nimbus behind their heads; the frescoe illustrating the story of the Queen of Khotan; the scrap faded frescoe on stucco and the ink-sketch on paper depicting a she-camel suckling her calf, are drawn free from the pernicious rules of the Brahmanical Shilpa Shastras. The Yar Khoto pictures retain a distinctly Indian character. The paintings at Chhiqqan Kol and Toyog are in the Indian style. The frescoe frieze preserved in the ruined temples at Muran illustrates the familiar Vessantara Jataka. At Dandan Uiliq and Khadaliq, wooden panels and frescoes depicting the three headed Mahesa or Sadasiva, seated on a pair of bulls, a seated four armed Bodhisattva, a four armed Ganesha, and a nymph standing in a lotus tank with a nude boy beside her, illustrate the characteristic features of the Subjective Indian Art in the 7th and 8th centuries A. D. The stucco figure from the Rawak stupa court, the seated Buddha with shaven head from Idikucari, and the series of figures of Broahma, Indra, Shiva accompanied by Parvati and Nandi, from Ming Oi, are all easily recognizable. The Indian Artists who made the

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

illustrations for the fables of Bidpai in the distant town of Ghazna, introduced Indian themes into the setting, which are of great importance. The Koran absolutely forbids the Muslims to make the likeness of anything in heaven or on earth. The Artists were, therefore, Indian. no doubt, who decorated " the mosque at Jerusalem ereeted by the Khalif Abdul Malik, with the images of the Prophet of Islam and paintings depicting heaven and hell. The Jumai Mosque at Isfahan exhibits on the walls two paintings, one of Ali the son-in-law of the Prophet and another representing Fatima veiled." *

From climatic causes most of the records mentioned above. have perished. Small pictures on paper, in albums are extremely perishable. Some of them have been destroyed by rhe fanatical followers of the non-Indian sects, a fact of which Dr. V. Le Cog discovered terrible proof when he opened a chamber filled with skeletons of Artist-monks and other signs of ruthless slaughter. The sand buried ruins of Khotan and Turkistan have restored some fresco-paintings of extraordinary interest because they tell us a great deal about the Indian Artists who took shelter in the Buddhist monasteries at Idiqutin Shahri, Ming Oi and other places. But within the limits of India proper no notable paintings of the period (650 A. D.-1570) have come down to us. The older Hindu palaces having almost all disappeared and many hundreds of ancient temples in Northern India, having been destroyed by order of the idol-hating Muslim sovereigns, practically no specimens of frescoes have survived. There was no voluntary cohesion among the many petty states in India. No sovereign arose vigorous enough to impose his will upon his neighbours. It was, in fact, a period of stagnation, when the energy of the whole country was largely dissipated in internecine political strife; and the tyrannical Brahman priests prevented the free play of the Artists.

* A History of Fine Art of India and Ceylon—V. A. Smith.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVEN

INDIAN ART IN THE MUGHAL PERIOD

Indian Art of the Mughal period can neither be differentiated nor eliminated altogether from the entire fabric of Indian Art. The year 1193 A.D. marks the beginning of the Muslim Period in the history of Indian Architecture. The early Muslim rulers of India were too busy with the work of conquest to allow themselves time to indulge in artistic fancy. They, therefore, adapted their needs to the existing architecture. But as soon as they succeeded in securing their authority, their successors began to devote their mind and money to the revival of the Objective School of Art in India. The pioneers of the Mughal dynasty made great use of their imperial influence in encouraging that particular branch of Indian Art. The initial step in the revival was taken by the Emperor Humayun. It further developed under the constructive genius of his famous son, Akbar the great. Under the aesthetic Jehangir, with his intelligent patronage, it reached its meridian, which was maintained during the magnificent reign of his son Shah Jehan. Aurangzeb's puritanical zeal offered little encouragement to the Artists. And thereafter the long continued political and social agony which accompanied the decline and fall of the Mughal Empire although necessarily limited the opportunities for practice of art and diminished its rewards, the Objective School of Indian Art did not cease to live.

Within about eighty years after the death of Muhammad the Prophet (A. D. 632), the followers of Islam reigned supreme over Arabia, Persia, Syria, Western Turkistan, Sindh, Egypt, North Africa, and Southern Spain. They took possession of Samarkand and Herat in the 15th century. In India all conditions were favourable for the marvellously rapid extension of the Muhammadan power. "The long period of bloodshed and destruction which followed the Muhammadan invasions was an unmitigated disaster to India and her great civilisation. But it was the will of Providence!" It was an age when the Brahmanical tyranny had reached its apex. Their metaphysical researches in the field of of Indian Art were too abstruse for the comprehension of the masses. The elaborate symbolic ritual which was intended to serve as a spiritual kindergarten for the masses, was overgrown with superstition and chicanery. The Muslim sword was the Creator's

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

pruning-knife which removed the decaying branches and laid as new impulse for the progress of the immortal tree of Indian Art which He himself had planted in Hindustan.

Fundamentally the Mughals were alien in India, conforming to the law and rituals of Islam prevalent in Mecca, Isfahan or Constantinople. But the influence of Indian soil forced them into the traditional channel of India, unconsciously gave them a new impetus and gradually absorbed them into the people of Hindustan The Mughals quitted their traditional grooves which were essentially and avowedly foreign, and transposed themselves into an Indian key. India surrendered her body to the Muhammadan conquerors so that from her womb a new Islam (the Din Illahi) might be born and through her self-sacrifice the sufferings of Indian Artists might be mitigated.

The Prophet (Muhammad) had declared in effect that 'On the day of resurrection those who had been guilty of making pictures of animate objects would be ordered to breathe life into their handiwork and those unable to do so would perish in torment.'* The imitation of living forms was regarded as a blasphemy, in as much as the painter brings into being a pseudo-creation, as it were in mockery of God, who alone gives life. It is doubtful whether the Prophet realized perfectly that sculptures and paintings had not been invented for the Bedouins of the Great Desert; that they would never succeed in practising them, a thing above their power; that the representation of the human figure lay far beyond their reach and it was better for the 'cobbler to stick to his last.' Though it is always a proof of tact and intelligence to call a thing forbidden when one is incapable of doing it, yet men should not be very prone to disparage and forbid in others what they themselves cannot do. The Arabs faithfully obeyed their religious prohibitions. Their knowledge of Chemistry, Medicine, Mathematics, and Astronomy was wholly derived from Indian sources. The high born Arab youths would go in quest of knowledge to the great universities of India (e. g., Taksha-sila, Nalanda etc.), to join the crowd of students which gathered from all parts of Asia. "It was India that taught Islam in the impressionable years of its youth, formed its philosophy and esoteric religious ideals, and inspired its most characteristic expression in literature." But their religious prohibition against figure-painting and book-illustration, continued to be respected by the followers of Islam up to the very end of the

* Mishkat, Book 16 (Kitab-ul-libas), Chapter V, Bab-ut-Taswir, Section 1.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

tenth century. It was the soil of Hindustan that gradually turned the Musalman invaders' rigid attitude to slackness, to concessions, to compromise with the spirit of Indian Art. "Their rigid tradition and integral observance began to be looked on by themselves as antiquated and tedious. They became an irksome memory which the followers of Islam were wise enough not to evoke. The meagre and monotonous framework within which the Prophet originally enclosed it, cracked on every side and burst into pieces that very day when his followers quitted the Desert and landed on Hindustan." The Arab governors issued coins with the King's head and the insertion of Arbic legends in minute characters. Muhammad of Ghor was obliged to issue coins bearing the image of a Hindu goddess. It is a common error to blame only the Shia sect of Islam for having been always lax in their open disregard of the Koranic prohibition. By descent the Mugal Emperors were Sunnis. The Sunnis took their name from the Sunnat, 'the path' or usage of the Prophet, in which the prohibition of pictorial art is recorded as a particular law. But even the Sunni Mughals ceased to follow the law faithfully when they landed on Indian soil. They threw off the stiffness and formality of their own tradition, and drew fresh inspiration from the study of nature which the Muhammadan law, as interpreted by the Caliphs had denied them. Humayun and Akbar revived the art of miniature painting and they instinctively turned to the 'converted' descendants of the Indian Objective Artists for guidance. "Akbar, compared with his predecessors in the portrait, changed his whole appearance. Gone is the rakish high-peaked cap the Kulah of the Tukoman, and in its place is the closely bound turban. Gone is the free grown beard of the orthodox Musalman and in its place is the shaven chin with the side whisker or 'galmuchh' of the Mathura Hindu. In dress and in feature Akbar bears little resemblance to any of his ancestors. It is even recorded that Akbar as well as Jehangir at one time went so far as to adapt the tilak or caste mark of the Hindus." Akbar's inward conversion found expression in the religion devised by himself called the Din Illahi whose doctrine enabled him to follow his own inclinations in most things especially in the sphere of painting. He cared little about the Prophet when he wrote, "There are many that hate painting, but such men I dislike. It appears to me as if a painter had quite peculiar means of recognizing God; for a painter in sketching anything that has life, and in devising its limbs one after the other, must come to feel that he cannot bestow individuality upon his work

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

and is thus forced to think of God, the Giver of life, and will thus increase in knowledge." Abul Fazl writes, "I have to notice that the obscuring of the figures of objects and the making of likeness of them, which are often looked upon as an idle occupation, are, for a well-regulated mind, a source of wisdom and an antidote against the poison of ignorance". These sentiments speak for themselves, their object being to show that the Muslims of the period were prepared to put aside their religious conviction so as to enjoy to the full their pleasure in painting. Akbar keenly enjoyed the Objective Indian Art and prided himself on his skill as a connoisseur. Abul Fazl writes, "His majesty himself sat for his likeness and also ordered to have the likeness taken of all the grandees of the realm." Akbar's coins exhibit a falcon commemorating the capture of Asigarh, a duck, a crowned archer, and a veiled lady as a memorial of the submission of the King of Bijapur. Jehangir although a Sunni did not allow any of the tenets which conflicted with his own pleasures or opinions to carry weight. There are portraits of Jehangir at every age, from a babe to an elderly man. "He alone of all the Mughal sovereigns in India dared to put his own portrait on coins intended for circulation. He disregarded the Koranic prohibition of strong drink, and was not ashamed of showing himself on the coinage holding a goblet of wine. Jehangir not only liked to see pictures of himself on all occassions but was interested also in the portraits of other Sunnis from the highest official to the insignificant chorus girl who brought lustre to the Mughal rule." The names of some of the principal people in the picture are minutely written near them. The early portraits of the Mughal period essentially confined themselves almost entirely to the lives of men, and paying little attention to the doings of the fair sex, who lived almost entirely behind the veil. But even the rigid seclusion of females prescribed by the Muslim usage had to allow considerable liberty to the Mughal queens due to the strong influence of Indian soil. Jehangir died in 1627. His last words were the characteristics of a true Objective Artist or a nature worshipper, "Let my tomb lie open to the winds of heaven, so that the rain and dew may fall on it". The court artists of Shah Jehan were greatly encouraged in drawing portraits, in illustrating legend and history or contemporary life, both in fresco on the walls of palaces and villas and in exquisite miniature paintings on paper, usually intended for book-illustration. The Webb gems bear the

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

feat performed by Shah Jehan in cleaving asunder a lion which was mauling a courtier ; Shah Jehan with a moustache but no beard. The Sardonyx cameo represents two elephants with riders, locking their tusks and trunks together apparently in combat. Under Shah Jehan's patronage Objective Indian Art attained to its highest watermark. Aurangzeb was too zealous a puritan himself to care for Art. But the patronage set by his predecessors had not died out. Princes and nobles of his time still kept court painters. Portraiture continued to be practised with great success. There are portraits depicting Aurangzeb himself in his old age reading a book ; Nawab Shayista Khan, and Muhsin Khan. The Victoria Albert Museum contains noticeable pictures including the portrait of Shah Alam seated on a balcony. All the Mughal Emperors from Babur the founder of the dynasty, right down to Bahadur Shah the last King of the line are thus, fully represented. Their portraits show their great personal prowess as well as testify that the Islamic ban on fine arts could not restrain them from the influence of Indian Art. No foreign ordinance, however, strongly worded or inspired could prevent the Mughals in India from giving free play to their aesthetic impulses. While discussing the characteristics of Indian Art in the Mughal Period, the most important fact that should not be lost sight of, is this that from foreign lands the Mughals had come to India with their religious injunctions or superstitions, but the influence of Indian Art converted them through and through so that they broke away from their religious covention, practised and patronised Indian Art and ruled India as Indian national kings, in considerable vigour for a period of two centuries and a half.

The sympathetic attitude of the Mughals towards the Objective Art, led a number of Indian Artists or their converted descendants from outside India making their way to the Mughal Court to carry on their work. They all retained their old traditional ideal of the Objective Indian Art. They went direct to Nature and drew inspiration from life itself. They embodied their spiritual conceptions in realistic manner. But religious topics played no part in their artistic productions. They retained their traditional devotion to the delineation of likeness but the subjects of their paintings were then largely drawn from incidents conneced with the magnificent court life of the time. The subjects chosen were portraits of princes and courtiers, scenes of palace life and aristocratic amusement, or lively delineations of favourite chargers

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

and elephants etc. It should not be supposed that Indian Art under the Mughal rule was limited to a very narrow range. No, neither the vision of the Indian Artists was limited, nor their spiritual instinct did wither. Instead of tiresome restrictions being placed upon their artistic expression, the artists were encouraged by the Mughal Emperors e. g., Akbar and Jehangir, to seek and find sources of artistic inspiration wherever they felt impelled to do so. They introduced groups of saints and produced scores of their portaits. But religious subjects were deliberately avoided. The Indian Artists of the Mughal Period intentionally secularised Indian Art as a reactionary measure against the past Brahmanical tyranny. But they did not lack the high spiritual purpose which deserves the appreciation and careful study. They did not give up their birth right as the ethical teachers and spiritual helpers of mankind. Indian paintings of the Mughal Period outwardly appear as purely secular, chiefly concerned with the pomps and vanities of the rich and occasionally venturing into the land of romance. But each and every painting is firmly based on the Objective ideal of Indian Art that penetrates to the soul of things and brings us into closer relation with Nature's eternal verities.

What really renders Indian Art of the Mughal Period so interesting subject of study is that the Indian Artists adapted themselves to suit the environment, but did not give up their old traditional characteristics. They, no doubt, confined their pictorial art to portraying the somewhat materiastic life of the Mughal Court, with its state functions, processions, hunting expeditions; but, throughout, they maintained the ideal and the creed of the Art of their motherland:—

Perspective—Indian Art of the Mughal Period, if closely studied for the purpose, would be found to retain the same old method of perspective for the expression of distance. The Artists told their contemporary stories in their own mother-tongue and they are fully comprehended by them who know the characteristics of Ancient Indian Art. But the fact that they had the capacity to show perspective in a very able manner is also proved by the painting which shows a group of cavalry descending a steep incline. The drawings of both horses and riders are unusually well rendered. There can be no shadow of doubt that the Indian Artists of the Mughal Period succeeded in their task.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Light and Shade :—No light and shadow or cast shadow are observable in Indian Art of the Mughal Period. Only a delicate toning and modelling are introduced to bring out the relief.

Mudras :—The landscape of the back ground, the apparently affected pose of laying the hands naturally over each other on the sword-hilt and a few flowers growing about the feet were intended to show that 'Man is never free from environment or Maya.' The pose and expression of the hands throughout in Indian Art have received special attention of the Artists. With the ancient and mediaeval Indian Artists the mudra or symbolism of the hands, was a deep study, as revealed in much of their sculptures and frescoe paintings. The same traditional characteristics animated their successors during the Mughal Period and they made good use of it in their portraiture. Whether the Mughal Emperors are shown grasping a sword, toying with a flower or a piece of jewellery, holding a hawk, or their hands merely placed one over the other, the idea underlying is always the same.

Haloes.—Haloes round the heads of the Mughal Emperors and saints of the period, several winged fingers, and nimbed cherubin floating on clouds, are derived from the old Indian tradition.

Collaboration.—It is rare to find any miniature of the Mughal Period which is entirely the work of one artist. For example, the execution of Adam Khan was drawn by a number of Artists, outlines by Miskin, painting by Sarwan, and the figures by Madho. This system strikes the occidental as a somewhat unusual one and they take it as a craft rather than a fine art. But this system clearly indicates the continuation of the old Indian tradition and philosophy that the individual souls mingle with the Universal Soul or in other words the Broahmatma finally absorbs the Jivatmans.

Anonymity :—The names of the artists of the Mughal Period were rarely attached to their paintings. Except for Abul Fazl's description of a few leading ones, the Indian Artists of the Mughal Period are very vague personages, articulate only in their art, which on its part tells more of something else than of the Artist's own individuality. Like their ancient Indian predecessors, no details of their lives have been preserved, no characteristic sayings have been recorded, no anecdotes related, even portraits of themselves are rare. Although they painted likeness in profusion of those for whom they worked; undescribed and

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

undefined they stand, a shadowy group in the back-ground of the royal drama in which they took such a noteworthy part, never once stepping out into the light. On many of the illustrations in the manuscripts, there are inscriptions which are written with the object of identifying the pictures with the Artists who are presumed to have painted them. But unfortunately the reliability of all those inscriptions is open to question, especially when they are Subject to a close scrutiny. Although the names are given, none of them is in the writing of the Artist himself. They were subsequently added by the clerks or munshis employed either at the court of the Mughals or in the office of the Imperial Library. In the case of a number of paintings, notably in the British Museum Darabnama, frequent corrections in the Artists' names are visible. As an instance of the unreliability of the names on the paintings, one picture in the Bankipur Timurnama bears the name of Bihzad. It has no resemblance to the work of that great Indian* Artist. It is sure and certain that the instances thus outlined above prove the continuation of the old Indian tradition which the Indian Artists even under the Mughal rule, endeavoured to maintain.

Nudity :—Johnson's Collection contains some miniatures of the Mughal Period, devoted to the ladies, some half nude in the bath or at their toilet. Apparent nudity among the females is found in the Sanchi sculptures. Female figures were represented nude on the Jaina sculptures at Mathura. Thus, nudity in paintings of the Mughal Period was not a new thing.

Portraiture :—Portraiture has been of considerable popularity in India from very remote times. It was, therefore, no innovation in India when the Mughals came here. It simply rose into prominence in their time. A study of a large number of portraits of the Mughal Period shows that the Indian Objective Artists of the period were expert in depicting features in two definite methods: (a) in rigid profile, and (b) in the three quarter faced pose. But taking the portraits of the period as a whole, it will be found that features drawn in profile are far greater in number. The profile method of depicting the sitter from the side was not confined only to the head and features but also to the feet. And this conventional profile pose belongs to the ancient Indian tradition. Moreover the Mughals are often seen forming part of a large group in a picture, a style which is absolutely Indian.

Decorative Tendency :—Infinite patience in finishing the

*See next Chapter.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

plumed and jewelled headdress, in rendering the pearly hues of the white drapery faultlessly and setting off sparkling contrasts of emerald, ruby, gold and jade cannot fail to remind us of the decorative tendency of the Objective Artists of the Gupta period.

Symbols :—The Indian Artists who were indispensable to the Mughals, adapted themselves to the environment but silently and consciously followed their own traditional ideal. "The very dome of the temple mandapam became the dome of the Muslim mosque and tomb though shorn of its former exuberant symbolism which was either offensive to the unsophisticated mentality of the foreigners or beyond the range of their philosophy. The painted arch of the prayer carpet and mihrab was derived from the symbolic arch of the Buddhist and Hindu shrine. The horse-shoe arch was the sun window of Buddhist chaitya halls and Hindu temples. The cathedral mosques of Muslim royalty were oriented like the Vaishnava temple, and their entrances corresponded to the temple gopurams and the gates of the Indian villages. The minars of the mosques were adaptation of Indian Towers of Victory, which were an elaboration of Aryan royal standards. Finally, the ensign of Islam became the cresent moon, Shiva's bow, which had been the symbol of India, the Land of the Moon, or of India's holy land, Aryavarta, long before the Prophet of Mekka was born."

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT

ARTISTS OF THE MUGHAL PERIOD

The analysis of the personnel of the Objective School of Indian Art in the Mughal period, reveals one noticeable fact that except for a few artists brought from outside, all the artists were local Indians, originally Hindu. Though almost all their paintings are anonymous, yet it would not be difficult to compile a list of their names. Abul Fazl's list considers the most eminent numbers of seventeen artists of which four are Muslims and thirteen, Hindus. The Waqiati-Babari (History of Babur) noted the names of twenty two artists, out of which nineteen are Hindus and three, Muslims. In the Razmnamah twenty eight names have been noted of whom twenty one are Hindu. It is more than probable that there were other Hindu Artists of lesser repute, who were attracted by the Mughal Emperors' unbounded patronage, although no accounts of them have been preserved. In drawing attention to the Hindu Artists at the Mughal Court, it should be emphasized that only those who were highly reputed for their records, were noted. And almost all of them were of the Chitera, Silavat, Khati, and Kahar or palanquin-bearer caste. They were of lowly origin and a clean Sudra and they were not numbered among the twice-born. In Muslim society a Hindu converted to Islam possesses the same rights and privileges like other members of the society. Naturally if a person happened to be a Hindu, born of a low caste, the religious change was decidedly for the better. It is thus almost certain that besides the few outsiders all the remaining Muslim Artists at the Mughal Court were not aliens. They were previously Hindu of low caste. They embraced Islam and changed their names upon initiation in the same way as the low caste Indian Christians drop their pagan names. But change of religion and name does not imply change in nationality, and a Hindu who embraces Islam or Christianity does not cease to be an Indian. Thus there should not be any doubt that almost all the Muslim Artists of the Mughal Period were Indian as much as their Hindu Sudra colleagues were. And therefore though they confined themselves to portraying the somewhat materialistic life of the Mughal Court, with its state functions, processions, hunting expeditions, etc., their Art in treatment, in its motives, in sentiment and in temper, generally strikes the ancient Indian traditional note.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

To help the Indian Artists in their Objective Ideal, the Mughal Emperors instinctively turned to Persia, where the Indian immigrants had already spread artistic atmosphere. The personal interest and sympathetic attitude of the early Mughals led to a number of descendants of the Indian immigrants, though already converted to Islam, back to the land of their forefathers. Thus we can safely infer that the Artists welcomed from other countries outside India, noted for the excellence of their paintings, were originally Indian. Although, at present, it is absolutely impossible to distinguish them by their Musalman names and titles, still in some cases their nationality can be traced out of their nicknames. As for example, at the Court of Sultan Husain Mirza, was the Objective Artist namely Bihzad who founded a new school distinguished for minute finish and careful observation of nature. It was from his school that Babur, Humayun, and Akbar drew most of their court painters. It is said that what Raphael was to the Art of Europe, Bihzad was to the Art of Asia. His genius freed the 'Art of Portraiture' from the impersonal convention, bringing into it life and character by means of his exquisite drawing and modelling. Bihzad's Musalman name was Kamal-uddin. But he is best known to us by his nickname 'Bihzad' of which the correct spelling should be 'Bihzat' (बिजात) or दूसरी जाति का belonging to a different nation. Moreover the professional ancestry of Bihzad is traced back to Ustad Gung. Here the word 'Gung' does not mean 'dumb' but suggests the Gangetic plain. Thus we find that Bihzad was directly connected with the Indian nation.

In the Mughal Period the converted Indian Artists were noted for their industry and skill. The Mughal Emperors entrusted them even with the most responsible task as that of the Revenue Commissioner. But inspite of all religious differences the unconverted Hindu Artists were also favourably situated. They formed the retinue of the Court. In the direct employ of the Emperors they carried on their work. They were probably not paid servants, but on the production of a good piece of painting they were given a substantial present and the original copy used to be kept in the Imperial Library of the Mughals.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE

PAINTINGS OF THE MUGHAL PERIOD

I. BABUR

On the eve of Babur's invasion the tradition of Indian frescoes was still existent but not in its original form. The painting, instead of being applied to the living rock, as at Ajanta and other sites, was adapted to the surface of structural edifices. Babur the founder of the Mughal Dynasty in India, rarely does make any reference to the Art of Painting in his autobiography, and then only in a desultory way. He was a mighty hunter, an enthusiastic traveller, an insatiable sight seer, and an eager student of the habits and appearance of animals and birds. His real interests were not centred in the people of India, but in his own native land beyond the Oxus where the migrated Indian Objective Artists had kindled the devotion of the inhabitants to flowers, gardens, and the beauties of Nature. Though their remote influence could not give Babur the hand of a painter, yet enabled him to write so feelingly of the beauty of the camp-fires. His aesthetic spirit, if opportunity given, might have achieved great things. But Babur lived before his time.

II. HUMAYUN

Humayun found leisure for many peaceful occupations. He brought back some of the descendants of the Indian Artists from Tabriz and utilized their services. It is related in Timurnama that he and his son Akbar took lessons in Drawing and interested themselves generally in painting. But fate decreed that Humayun should but taste the cup of happiness only to have it dashed from his lips. Information of his untimely death brought post-haste to his young son Akbar is recorded by an Indian Artist.

III. AKBAR

Akbar was enthroned without delay. But almost immediately signs of insubordination became apparent. It was natural, therefore, that no great progress in Fine Arts was made for the first fifteen years of his reign. Abul Fazl in his Aini-Akbari refers in the most emphatic manner to Akbar's personal interest in Indian Art. But the natural genius of the Objective Indian Artists only required Akbar's patronage to rise to a high state of efficiency. The sympathetic attitude of the great monarch eventually led to a number of descendants of Indian Artists back to their Mother land. They received a great stimulus and added brilliance to their

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

palette, creating the masterpieces of the 17th and 18th centuries. Indian Artists' talent seems to have astonished the Mughals, for Abul Fazl pays them a generous tribute and admits, "Their paintings surpass our conception of things. Few indeed, in the whole world are found equal to them." No longer were the Artists to paint large scenes on the surface of walls in course tempera colours, which could be readily repainted when injured by the climate or the passage of time. Instead they were required to adapt this art to small pictures on paper. Paper was one of the commodities which the Musalmans brought into India about the 15th century A. D. It was not practically unknown in India for the Gujerati traders of the west coast utilized it in their transactions with the countries across the seas. However, under the Mughals this article came into official use. It soon found favour with all classes and came into general use. Special kinds of paper were prepared for the development of painting and a factory was established at Sialkot in the Punjab. Indian Artists adapted their paintings to small dimensions of paper. Early writers describe as 'miniatures' all the drawings and paintings on paper or vellum* irrespective of size. But modern practice restricts the application of the term 'miniature' to portraits on a small or minute scale, whether executed on ivory or other materials. The dimensions within which a picture may be termed a miniature are variously given, but it is now generally accepted that any painting that is easily portable and can be passed from hand to hand to be viewed, is a miniature, and to this very reasonable description the Indian miniatures of the Mughal Period fully conform.

Abdul Fazl's list provides us with the names of the artists of Akbar's time. They were Abdus Samad (Akbar's tutor), Daswanth, Mir Sayyid Ali, Farrukh Beg, Khusrau Quli, Jamshid, Miskin, Basawan, Lal, Bhim, Sur, Kesu, Mukund, Madhu, Jagan, Mahesh, Khemkaran, Tara, Sanwlah, Haribans and Ram. From the article on 'The Art of Painting' in the Aini Akbari, it is possible to visualise that the works of all painters were weekly laid before Akbar by the daroghahs and the munshis. Rewards were conferred and the monthly salaries increased according to excellence of workmanship. Akbar supplied judicious encouragement and intelligent patronage in a most liberal manner. He realized that the failure of the kings who had established themselves in various parts of

* Paper, now in use, is manufactured out of wood pulp. The finest parchment is made from the skin of calves and is called 'vellum'.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

India on the eve of the Mughal invasion, to maintain anything like harmonious rule was due in a measure to their lack of sympathy with the Indian Artists, to a total disregard of their liberty and their mental outlook. Akbar's instincts told him that if he desired to have a vast and peaceful empire in India, he must encourage the Art of India as well.

The following notable paintings and picture-manuscripts were executed in the reign of Akbar :—

1. The rustic scene of the herdsman.
2. The arrival scene of Tansen at the Court.
3. The picture-manuscripts namely Darabnama and the Babur-nama.
4. The Jaipur Razmnama and the Bankipur Taimurnama.
5. The Baharistan, a collection of poems by Jami.
6. The Khamsah, a collection of five mathnawis by Nizami.
7. The Akbarnama written by Nuruddin Jehangir.

IV. JEHANGIR.

Jehangir's mother was an Indian, a Rajput princess. Due to his mother's influence he did not fully conform to the tenets of the Sunni Sect. But there are instances when he showed the iconoclastic spirit. He caused the image of Vishnu as the Boar Avatar to be broken and flung into the Pushkar Lake.* However, the Objective School of Indian Art may be considered to have reached its meridian under him. Jehangir's patronising method differed from that of his father. Akbar used to leave the Artists very much to their own devices, to rise or fall by their own individual selection of model. But Jehangir spent much of his leisure in travelling about his dominions, revelling in the gardens he had built, visiting various historical localities, and enjoying the glorious scenery of the mountains. Where the hand of Nature failed, he supplied the deficiency by the hands of the Indian Artists, painting the walls of the dwellings with scenes and designs of the most gratifying description. Jehangir's acknowledged intention was frank' 'Objective Realism.' In Akbar's time each artist's name was written by the court clerks on his work. But at the time of Jehangir, the artists' names were rarely attached to their pictures and no account of their lives has been handed down to us. A few names mentioned in Jehangir's memoirs are Bishandas, Farrukh Beg, Abul Hasan, Mansur, Manohar, and Govardhan,

* Tuzak-i-Jahangiri ; Maasir-i-Jahangiri.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

The notable paintings executed in the reign of Jehangir are as follows :—

1. An interior scene of Jehangir's durbar.
2. Two shikar or hunting scenes.
3. Three hunters approaching the feeding deer.
4. Fighting scene between a snake and a spider.
5. Cavaliers descending a steep incline.
6. Marriage scene of Prince Khurram.
7. The dying man.
8. Priests and Religious Mendicants.
9. The Turkey Cock.
10. The Cheer Pheasant.
11. The Peafowl.
12. The Ducks.
13. Chinar Trees.

V. SHAH JEHAN

India enjoyed comparative peace in the reign of Shah Jehan. The luxurious court offered liberal encouragement to all capable Artists. Shah Jehan's artistic patronage did not specially confine itself to painting ; it was more comprehensive, and diffused itself over the whole field of arts and crafts, with the result that all the branches flourished. The quality of painting was maintained, but the Emperor's name is, however, chiefly associated with decorative architecture, which attained to its highest watermark. The names of the artists as recorded are : Chitarman alias Kalyan Das, Anup Chattar, Manohar, Muhammad Nadir, Mir Hasim, Muhammad Fakirullah Khan. Shah Jehan had not that passion for pictorial art which was a notable characteristic of his predecessors. The leading families of his time found it fashionable to keep in their service painters whom they employed either in ornamenting the walls of their houses with paintings, or portraying the chief members.

The notable paintings or albums of his time are as under :—

1. *Dara Shukoh's Album.* Among those who took a keen interest in paintings was the heir apparent, Shah Jehan's eldest son Dara Shukoh. His little album has been recently purchased by the India Office Library.

2. The portrait of Dilpasand or Heart's Delight, the favourtie charger of Dara Shukoh.

3. The Tiny Cat.

4. Elephants.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

5. A lady seated on a balcony watching golden sunlight illuminating the water below.

6. A review of Cavalry by Shah Jehan mounted on an elephant.

7. A number of portraits of Shah Jehan.

8. Holy Men and Ascetics.

9. Illustrations of popular stories e. g., Rupamati and Baz Bahadur ; Laila and Majnun ; Khusru and Shirin ; Kamroop and Kamta.

VI. AURANGZEB

Unlike his father and grand-father whose mothers were Rajput, Aurangzeb was the son of a Muhammadan queen namely Arjuman Begum, the lady of the Taj. Tavernier who knew Aurangzeb personally remarks that he especially showed great zeal for the Sunni Sect, of which he was so faithful a follower that he surpassed all his predecessors in external observation of the law. In 1658 Aurangzeb deposed his father and took possession of the throne with the design of insisting upon the law of Muhammad being observed in all its strictness as it had been relaxed during the reigns of his predecessors. Due to Aurangzeb's puritanical and ultra-orthodox disposition, the Indian Artists received little encouragement. Among the nobles and courtiers, Indian Pictorial Art still had a certain amount of popularity, and in some localities it flourished. But it ceased to receive the all important stimulus of royal patronage, and accordingly languished. The Emperors of Bijapur, an important Muhammadan State in the Deccan greatly favoured Indian Art. Their portraits and some illustrated books bearing their royal seal have survived. Bernier the French physician describes the servile conditions under which the Indian Artists lived and carried in their work in the middle of the 17th century. No longer were paintings produced for the sole edification of the Mughal Emperor, or artists retained only for the purpose of decorating the royal summer houses and pavilions. The principal Omrahs used to keep a number of painters who worked in their houses, taught the children, and were stimulated to exertion by the hope of reward. The painters had lost much of their prestige. They were accomodated in large halls or workshops, superintended by a master who did not hesitate to punish an importunate painter with the Korrah, that long and terrible whip hanging at every Omrah's gate. Nothing but sheer necessity of blows from a cudgel kept the painter employed. Bernier writes, "If the artists were encouraged, the fine arts would flourish, but these unhappy men

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

are treated with harshness, and inadequately remunerated for their labour..... No artist can be expected to give his mind to his calling in the midst of a people who are either wretchedly poor, or who, if rich, assume an appearance of poverty, and who regard not the artistic beauty and excellence, but the cheapness of a painting; a people whose grandees pay for a work of art considerably under its value, and according to their own caprice. Is it not enough to damp the ardour of any artist when he feels that he can never hope to attain to any distinction?" The decline of the Mugal Empire began with Auranzeb's unsympathetic policy towards Indian Art. The Mughal Emperors owed their position as rulers of the vast territory mainly to the fact that they were whole heartedly the patrons of Indian Art. Late in life, Aurangzeb realized this truth and removed the heavy hand of imperial restraint on the artistic aspirations of his subjects. And therefore, in almost all the paintings produced during the latter half of the 17th century we see Aurangzeb, 'The Man of Moods', hunting, travelling, reading, governing, and commanding his army always in his declining years, never in his prime.

VII. THE LATER MUGHALS

For the first half of the Mughal Period, Indian Pictorial Art was an aristocratic one, that is, enjoyed by the ruling princes and the nobles around the court. With the death of Aurangzeb in 1707, miniature painting ceased to be entirely aristocratic and began to assume a democratic form. A demand for a cheap and popular form of portaiture arose. Several puppet kings followed Aurangzeb, one after another, at short intervals, and court intrigues leading to the assassination of the first three of them, took place in the first half of the 18th century. Under these unsettled conditions the artists could not be expected to carry on their occupations with any feeling of security. They soon felt the absence of wealthy patronage and began to desert the decaying capital in search of more flourishing centres. The feeble 'Later Mughals', themselves immersed in domestic strife and political dissention, failed to stem the tide of their dissemination.

CHARACTERISTICS

The paintings executed during the Mughal rule are, on the whole, secular in character. They have no profound association with any religion. The Objective Artists went direct to Nature for inspiration. Their paintings were mainly scenes from actual life which they studied at the feet of Nature. During the early part of the Mughal Period the subjects were largely drawn from incidents solely connected

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

with the magnificent court life and the pomps and vanities of palace life, of the time. But as time passed on, the subjects became more and more democratic. The special glory of the Objective School of Indian Art, during the Mughal Period attained in portraiture. The art of portraiture was no innovation in India when the Mughals came. The unconverted Indian Artists were so expert in portraiture that Jehangir selected one of them namely Bishandas for taking the portraits of the Shah of Persia, and the Chiefs of his State ; and he was so pleased with his work that he honoured the Artist with the gift of an elephant. There are scores of portraits produced in this period. The Mughal Emperors from Babur to Bahadur Shah the last king of the line are all fully portrayed. Added to these portraits, are pictorial records of many warriors, scholars, and poets, namely, Faizi, Sadi, Tansen, Raja Birbal, Raja Man Singh, Lady Roe, Father Francisco Corsi, Mulla-du-piyaza, who either by their heroic deeds or cultured achievements, brought lustre to the Mughal rule. There are paintings of holy men and ascetics of all religions, singly or in group seated under trees by the way side. The Mughal Emperors gave the Objective Artists an opportunity to immortalize every one present, from the highest official to the insignificant chorus girl. Fashion, in appearance as well as in dress, is very noticeable in Mughal portraiture. The expression on the faces is remarkable. Man is truly reflected in his portrait. A writer may describe a person in fulsome and flatterlng language ; but the portrait painter by means of the delicate outlining, delineates his sitter not only with the truth and the whole truth, but something more. He represents the person as his deeds have marked him, noble or petty, cruel or kind, generous or mean, true or false, strong or weak, The portrait is, therefore, spoken of not merely as 'rupam'. (a figure), but even as 'swarupam' the intrinsic aspect of the figure.

The practice of drawing from the living models led to the very remarkable achievements in representation of animal life. Ustad Mansur, Manohar, and Basawan were famous for their studies of animals and birds. They not only made studies of animals when dead but also at the critical and thrilling moment of hunting scenes. Manohar's portraits of Dilpasand, (the favourite charger of Dara Shukoh), the tiny cat, and the huge quadruped elephants are perfectly drawn. Among the bird-studies by Mansur, the Turkey cock, two saras, the cheer pheasant, and the peafowl are exceptionally well drawn. The Objective Artists of the Mughal period took infinite pains in depicting also the insect life, the fight between a snake and a huge spider which Jehangir saw while on his way from

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Kabul. The embellishment of miniatures by highly ornamented borders, in which bright hued flowers, butterflies and birds were freely introduced, became a distinctive feature of Indian Painting during the Mughal Period. Studies of plants, shrubs, and flowers introduced the Indian Artists to the beauties of Nature, and they represented them with no little truth and feeling. The later painters painted elaborate scenes filled with hills, streams and buildings treated in a realistic way. The Baharistan is a collection of poems in praise of the season of spring by Jami. The illustrative part was taken by the leading painters namely Miskin, Madhu, Mukund, Basawan, and Lal. Each of the six seasons in India is associated with a particular musical mode. Each principal mode is conceived to be presided over by a Rag or god of the mode, attended by Raginis or Nymphs of harmony. Now, these musical modes were also expressed by the Indian Artists in a Variety of measures and represented by delicate lines in the 'Ragmalas' or 'Garlands of Musical Modes', with the sweetness of the lyric that lulls the weary souls.

Things of beauty in nature always inspired the Objective Artists in India but the pursuit of beauty had never been their aim. They arrested the fleeting beauties in order to represent the constant one, the Immortal one, through them. They were not ascetice like the Subjective Artists who shut themselves out of this external world, but like mystics who communed with Nature to find the secret of the universal life. Objective Indian Art is not merely an imitation or record of facts and phenomena in Nature, but also the representation of the inner beauty through the external forms. The Objective Artists of the Mughal Period were not concerned with the subjective idea of the Divine; but they strove to realise the Universal, the Eternal and the Infinite in this very transitory realm of Nature. They expanded their artist-heart till not only human beings, but also animals, birds, insects, plants, flowers seasons, musical modes,—from the highest to the lowest, from the living to the inanimate, from the concrete to the abstract, all found a place in their heart grown great and infinite. And then their Artist-Soul studied the universe as one unbroken unity whose every pulse was their own pulse. They depicted the brotherhood of man as the brotherhood of universal life, of animals and of all lives down to the little spider. With the heart concentrated by Bhakti-yoga, with the eye of evenness for all things they beheld the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self,—

"सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि
ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥"

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER FORTY

OBJECTIVE INDIAN ART AFTER THE FALL OF THE MUGHAL EMPIRE

The bigotry of the Emperor Aurangzeb had already disintegrated the artistic atmosphere revived by his predecessors, in India. After his death, Objective Indian Art lingered on under the feeble emperors who succeeded him. It is related that the Emperor Muhammad Shah gave away to Maharaja Siwaji Jai Singh of Jaipur, Akbar's own copy of the Persian version of the Mahabharata. This Razmnama was fully illustrated by Indian Artists, and was regarded as one of the most precious objects in the Imperial Library at Delhi. Parting with such a unique possession marked the indifference of Muhammad Shah towards the artistic treasures of his predecessors. Living in the atmosphere of imperial state, Indian Artists' existence depended largely on aristocratic patronage. The disintegration of the Mughal Empire, therefore, compelled the Artists to scatter in detached units over various parts of India. Some families still remained at the Mughal capital not in service, but as workmen in the bazars. Others travelled far afield in their search for sympathy and support. So ultimately Objective Indian Art did not actually vanish from India when glory and grandeur passed away with the fading of the Mughal splendour.

KANGRA CENTRE

When the Mughal Court ceased to give the Artists further support, certain families of painters found shelter and patronage in a group of small states in the Punjab, namely Nurpur, Basohli, Chamba, Jammu, and Kangra. The main development of the Pahari centre at Kangra was due to the patronage of Raja Samsar Chand, the last great Katoch ruler of Kangra. The chief features of the Kangra Paintings are delicacy of line, brilliancy of colour, and minuteness of decorative detail. Portraiture, series of mythological illustrations and religious stories were the special themes of the Kangra painters. In the 19th century Maharaja Ranjit Singh also gave it some encouragement. On April 4, 1905 the great Dharmasala earthquake struck most of this district out of existence, leaving nothing of the prosperous town of Kangra but a mound of ruins. It is highly probable that some Kangra painters accompanied the two sisters of Anirudh (son of Samsar Chand), who were married to the Raja of Garhwal.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

JAMMU CENTRE

The characteristic examples of the Jammu Artists are illustrated in the Ragmala pictures, and other mythological themes.

LUCKNOW CENTRE

In 1732 A. D., Saadat Khan the Muslim Governor of Oudh asserted his independence and set up a separate dynasty at Lucknow. Artists worked under these Nawabs of Oudh, and retained some old characteristics.

BIHAR AND BENGAL CENTRES

A few families settled in Patna and Bengal where they received patronage from the early European merchants who desired miniature portraits of themselves and their family members.

DECCAN CENTRE

The rising government of Hyderabad attracted several groups of Objective Artists. The subject matter of the painters of Aurangabad and Daulatabad is generally semi-historical. The change of environment led to a corresponding change in the style of their painting.

MYSORE CENTRE

The Mysore Centre reached its high watermark under the rule of Krishna-raja Wodeyar. After his death in 1868, the artists dispersed.

TANJORE CENTRE

The decline of the Mughal support drifted some families further south under the protection of the Tanjore Raja, Sarabhoji. With the death of Sivaji the last Raja of Tanjore, the royal patronage ceased and the painters dispersed and changed their professions; some became goldsmiths, others engaged in the sola pith industry.

Conclusion.

On the break up of the Mughal Empire, the paramount power went to pieces. But Objective Indian Art did not die at once. It continued long after the glory of the Mughals had departed, but it gradually passed into the hands of an increasing number of less skilful painters. These painters flooded the bazars with paintings drawn from different outlook upon Nature and also with different idea of realism. The Mughal rule in India had, no doubt, freed the Indian Artists from the shakles of ecclesiastical tyranny, but had thrown them under the yoke of the rich. In the course of time the Objective Indian Art began to take on a more democratic character; the number of painters increased and their aim became commercial. Their business was to tickle the fancy of the rich people by supplying them what

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

they liked best. In order to gain a cheap popularity they began to follow fashion rather than their own inner urge. All sexual characteristics they perfectly studied and expressed in their paintings. They learnt precisely forms that expressed beauty of familiar experience and of a more sensuous nature as well. Their work was fashionable, sentimental, sensational, or erotic, and sometimes a combination of two or three of these characteristics. Paintings depicting pretty girls with the rose madder glowed in artificial glory on each cheek, constituted by far the majority of their paintings. In most cases, these popular artists deliberately ramained within the experience of other people in order to please them and attract their money. None of such paintings are worthy to be called Art but they plainly show that the Objective painters deserted their traditional ideal and consequently their art became merely an Art for the eye's sake.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER FORTY-ONE

THE BENGAL SCHOOL OF PAINTING

From the foregoing chapter it is now clear that towards the end of the nineteenth century, the later descendants of the Objective School, changed their general outlook in Art and their old ideal tradition almost came to an end. Briefly it may be said that the Objective Indian Art was approaching the final stage in its downward course and that its degradation was about to be complete. At this very time, simultaneously there came a reaction in the sphere of Subjective Indian Art chiefly by reason of the late Mr. E. B. Havell, an Englishman's efforts. With the intention of endeavouring to resusciate Subjective Indian Art and rescuing it from the degradation into which it had been drifted by the selfish Brahman priests, Mr. Havell sought out the Early Mediaeval Subjective Paintings and tried to revive the ancient ideal. The first step taken by Mr. Havell was a retrograde one. He contended that a return journey must be made back to the late mediaeval period where Indian Art began to lose its real Subjective Aspect. It was his avowed intention to secure an introspective outlook on things instead of busying with recording the superficial aspects of phenomena. He sought to wean the artist-mind from the external reality of the senses and revive the distinctive and essential characteristics of the Subjective Indian Art.

Mr. Havell was, in the course of time, followed by a group of Bengali painters who were eager to receive great credit without knowing what to do. They were absolutely incapable to follow out the Subjective Ideal which involves that the true knowledge of an object cannot be obtained until Art and the 'ist' meet in an act transcending distinction. The Subjective Theory regards as the source of truth not empirical perception (pratyaksha) but an inwardly known model (antarjneya rupa). In order that the form of an object may be brought fully and clearly before the mind, the image maker should meditate; and his success will be in proportion to his meditation. No other way—not indeed seeing the object itself—will achieve his purpose. But the painters of the Bengal School felt it too difficult for them to follow. Their method was to pick out the underlying reality of every appearance by stripping of all outward essentials which the various forms of being carry with themselves. They thought that only thus can the deep, innermost and real essence of things be made manifest.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

They do not, as yet, try to represent natural forms but to create forms is their aim. To destroy form would be nearer the mark. They consciously distort or malrepresent natural forms. They say that an Artist has an inherent right not only to deviate from the well-trodden paths of familiar forms, current in the world of Nature,—but also to compete with Nature, and to devise new shapes and forms. Human-figures in their paintings being abortions or painfully deformed beings, show their real incompetence. The expansion of of the chest is so much deliberately exaggerated that it is often difficult to distinguish a man from a woman. The absence of the laws of linear perspective in their work is not due to their inattentiveness but indicates their genuine lack of perspective in its widest sense. Their paintings are sometimes crude, much like the early efforts at expression seen in the primitive cave paintings of very early pre-historic times.

To avoid repetition of designs and styles prevalent in ancient times, the tenets of the Bengal School create peculiar styles of expression and fantastic designs which absolutely depart from the traditional conventions. They sometimes unconsciously use some traditional symbols which become meaningless in the whole atmosphere. Convention in Art means the manner of presentation by a general agreement. A conventional rose, for example, is a rose drawn according to what we all agree to be the typical nature of all roses. Convention in Art enables artist to deviate from detailed imitation of a particular object. Tradition stands for a historic continuity in the use of conventional methods of expression. Tradition is the Mother tongue of a nation and, therefore, when an artist works through it, he speaks directly to the heart of the people without the necessity for explanation. Traditional forms are race-conventions and not the ideas of one or a group of artists of a particular period. It is evident that the traditional conventions in ancient Indian sculptures and paintings must be studied carefully; so that the modern artists may not carry this obsession of the antique so far as to create anachronism by employing the costumes, hair style, etc., of those remote epochs in the representation of modern themes. Progress in every field of national culture is possible only by the preservation of the ideal of the past and a movement along the lines inherited.

The course, strong features and very passionate expression of the face in the figure-paintings of the Bengal School indicate sensuality and intellectual power of a low, self-seeking kind,

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

combined with an infinite capacity for the enjoyment of the pleasures of life. The painters of the School vie with one another to drag woman down from her discreet eminence, to proclaim her as either a play-thing or a temptress. They have no conception or picture of woman as the mother. It is instead the worship of the physical passion hardly calculated to elevate humanity. They represent the charm of woman in a physical sense with its inevitable sex attraction. The upper part of her body is represented either absolutely bare or covered with a piece of fine diaphanous muslin tinged by all kinds of erotic suggestion. The erotic rapture is not transfused into a spiritual ecstasy but rather reminds the beholder all ideas about sex.

In accordance with the ideal of the Bengal School an artist should work for the good of the work itself and not regard to the ends, however noble or ignoble. An artist, they say, is not a philanthropist. On one hand they say that the Artist who creates Art to please the people, prostitutes whatever of worth may be in him. On the other hand they strongly feel the lack of public patronage, and uttter indifference of the people. They regularly grumble that the aesthetic sense of the modern Indians is deficient and it will be many weary centuries before the Indian people have so clear a vision of life as is expressed in the great creative art of the Bengal School. It is true that ninety nine per cent of Indians are perfectly indifferent to the so-called Art of the Bengal School. It is not because that the present Indian Culture feels no imperative craving for Art such as one feels for tobacco, or that the minds of the majority are bolted and barred against new ideas, by prejudice and stupid self-complacency, and by that mental lack of alertness to seize the good in the new while it is new. It is not because that the rank materialism which is the basis of the modern Indian University system, tends to produce in the Indian mind the attitude so contrary to all the ideals of Subjective Art. But the only cause of it is that the ideal and method of the Bengal School of Painting is neither Subjective nor Objective. Its movement is neither in accordance with the ideal of the past, nor concerned with the problems of the present. The works of the Bengal School cannot be called 'Art' at all in the sense that they are something private, something the enjoyment of which is limited to the individual painter alone. A painting is no Art at all, if its enjoyment cannot be shared by others. A Painter is a true Artist when he can make his personal idea joyful to all men which he can never do if he has not a medium

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

common to all his audience. If he were made to live in a world where his own self was the only factor to consider, then that would be the worst prison imaginable to him, for an Artist's deepest joy is in growing greater and greater by more and more union with the all. It is a constant striving and suffering for him to maintain the separateness of this self of his own. Moreover the world has every right to enquire with respect to works of Art, what are they about, and what for; and if the Artist answers, about nothing and for nothing, or about myself and for myself or art for art's sake, the world owes him nothing. Offering stones for bread, he will be repaid in kind, and sooner or later buried without regret. The painters of the Bengal School pose like superior persons and claim to see recondite beauties in incompetent daubs, to which the public are blind. In all such cases this is sheer pretence to cover their ignorance, especially ignorance of the true purpose of Indian Art. Everyone of them makes himself an amateur and believes that Indian Art is something that lives in the museums to be duped in the mind of the perversely educated people who merely depend upon passing fashion for guidance and are unaccustomed to exercise their reasoning powers.

'The tenets of the Bengal School pose themselves as apostles of higher culture, as exponents of a superior order of Indian Art; and by so doing they have persuaded a group of Indians and the present Government to leave their Art institutions in their keeping, to adopt the models they approve of, and aim at the ideal at which they profess to aim.' They arrogate to themselves the power of deciding who are to be boomed as great artists, and who are to be abused,. This power they have used shamelessly, systematically booming as great artists, men, who have scarcely made good their claim to be considered painters at all ! The propagandists of the Bengal School do not search for facts or enunciate causes and leave them to speak for themselves. It is not whether their matter to be propagated is the truth that is of fundamental importance, but whether those whom it is desired to influence are brought in it and act upon it. They enjoy the support of the Indian Society centred in England, for propaganda. Propaganda exists where individual minds are infirm or badly trained; and it influences them without regard to their reasoning faculties. Viewed generally the new movement has made a more successful appeal to the Europeans than to the Indians. It is very little appreciated in the great art producing centres outside Bengal. And even the present cultured Indians in Bengal who have at heart the welfare and progress of Indian Art,

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

still reckon the movement of the Bengal School as injurious or pernicious to the Art of India.

The painters of the Bengal School not having the genius to direct the current of Subjective Indian Art in the right direction shown to them by Mr. Havell, have taken the easier downward plunge into the inane. That this should have happened was to be forseen; for whereas Mr. Havell the leader of the movement drew his inspiration direct from the vital source of India's magnificent art heritage— his followers pose themselves not merely as Creators but, rather as rivals of Vishvakarma. The most bewildering spectacle in the whole history of Indian Art is the fact that among the Bengalees the men of culture these people have lost all sense of direction so that every retrogresive step taken is regarded by them as an upward movement in the development of Indian Art. The fashionable exhibition of their paintings under the title of India Art is the most daring insult that has invaded the ideal and basic principles of Indian Art. Thousands of wretched little creatures are daily being taught the wrong method and incorrect ideal of Indian Art. If they happen to have been born insens -ible this would be of no great consequence, but it is misery to think of them who have had real sensibilities ruined by a group of impostors. The human ingenuity of the Bengal Painters had been already exhausted in forming fantastic theories to explain and justify their motive in fooling the public. They were falling like fiery autumn leaves showing exhaustion of the old forces. The collapse would have been complete, if it had not been supported by the British Government whose over anxiety lest Indian Art becomes westerinsed. In no other country in the world do the Government misapprehend the principles and ideal of National Art so unconsciously as that of India at present.

In India, Art is still the genial and all-pervading Presence, and though she has been dethroned from the palace, she has yet her place in the generous heart of the people. The Indian-Art-loving rulers have disappeared. It is greatly deplorable that the British Govern-ment impalpably oppose or show indifference to the genuine Indian Art and give the importance and encouragement to the propagation of the impostors. But altough at present the real artists of India are not so audible, yet they still survive in spite of all handicaps. Without patronage, support, and admiration from the Government; without feasts, wealth and adulation of the fashion-mongers; critised, traduced, and even contemned by their rival impostors, they still exist, learn to labour and to wait.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CHAPTER FORTY-TWO

MODERN INDIAN ART AND RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Modern India in matter of Fine Art is split into two main trends, the Naturalists and the Idealists. The modern naturalists adhere to the extreme view that the chief function of Art should be the expression in natural forms whether the idea be good or bad. The content of Art can find an expression only through appropriate forms. In ancient India, they say, the Aryans for many centuries refrained from committing to writing the esoteric doctrines of the Upanishads, from the feeling that a mantram would lose its efficacy if a single syllable were incorrect in expression or intonation. They believe that outward beauty is the sign of inward. Moreover an Artist's emotion comes to him through the perception of forms and his success in revealing that emotion lies in appropriate combination of lines aud colours. The Naturalists hold that all works of Art should be true to Nature. If the representation is of something they have not seen or that symbolises some unfamiliar abstract idea, it is thereby self condemned as untrue to Nature. To express, for example, human figure correctly, he must familiarise himself with the proportion of all the parts, and through his mastery over the anatomy of expression, he should enable us to read the appearance, and the movement of human beings. A work of Art without natural or intelligible form is the soul without the body. Further, Naturalism in Art is inseparable from human nature. In the infant stage, children's drawing is more of a short hand for a thing than correct representation. But after the age of eleven naturally they become conscious to compare their own representation of an object with its actual appearance. It is a significant fact that this naturalistic trend may have innumerable points of similarity with the Western Art, but it is in strict continuation of the old Objective Tradition in Indian Art, of course, to the extreme end.

The followers of the other trend are the extreme Idealists. They think that it is the idea that entitles a work to be called Art whether the workmanship be skilful or clumsy. An Artist's emotion is not due to what he sees, but only what he feels. They observe that it is not the vessel that is important but the wine which we pour into it; not the form, but the ideas which animate and transcend the form. The sensation of the internal space within our own living body is the analogy according to which the world is known to us. Idea is the only reality and that the universe exists only for

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

him who perceives. This idealism is in continuation of the old Subjective Theory of Indian Art but in its extreme aspect. The tenets of the Bengal School upheld this extreme view of idealism. But without being able to capture the true spirit of idealism they distorted the external features of objects and created unnatural forms such as elongated arms, somnolent eyes and complex convolutions of the body, etc. They did not care whether their movement succeeded in its aim to produce an art essentially Indian and suit the modern environment along the lines inherited.

So on the eve of the arrival of Dr. Rabindranath Tagore in the sphere of Indian Art, the so-called Artists of Modern India were divided categorically into the above mentioned two trends. Both the trends went extreme and were about to sweep away their ancient ideals. The shouting down of the other camp was their only hope of advertisement for its own wares. Their narrow and prejudiced views misrepresented the grand ideals of Indian Art to the world. At this very juncture Dr. Rabindranath Tagore arrived in the domain of Indian Art so as to make a compromise between the two trends. He taught them that the first and greatest thing for an Artist is to be original. But this does not mean that they should kick over and trample under foot the vast accumulation of tradition patiently piled up and welded together by the two Schools (Subjective and Objective) in the successive ages. A study of the traditional conventions in sculptures and paintings and the ideal of the older masters of the two Schools is most useful as a step forward in the progress of Indian Art, from where the beginner could climb higher up without the loss of time and energy. We stand in relation both to past and future; in the past we made the present, the future we are moulding now, and our duty to this future is that we should enrich, not destroy the ideal of the past. Next he taught both the groups that they were only partially right. It is true that the comtemplation of natural forms is never the immediate cause of artists' emotion. But at the same time it is certain that emotion can be expressed only in form. Ideas find their dwellings in forms. Like body and mind they live in complete unity and cooperative in the production of an organic whole. To the relationship of form there corresponds a relationship of spiritual import, and only when this fact has been grasped, ceases the duality of idea and form. Ideas and forms are not two separate cut-and-dried existences. But as it is not every form but a particular one that provokes the Artists' emotion so every emotion must be

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

expressed through an appropriate form. As a good thought, if it exists in words at all, must be in good words; no other kind is possible, so a good idea cannot be expressed in bad or inappropriate forms. When we see a picture we do not see the idea and the form separately. If we see the form as a physiologist might see it we are not seeing the picture. Again, if we see the idea as a philosopher might see it, we are not seeing the picture. The idea and its embodiment are, therefore, inseparable in Art. Children, when they begin to learn each separate letter of the alphabet, find no pleasure in it, because they miss the real purpose of the lesson; in fact, while letters claim our attention only in themselves and as isolated things, they fatigue us. They become a source of joy to us only when they combine into words and sentences and convey an idea. An artist is not simply a person with ideas, he is a person who is gifted with the skill to make his ideas manifest. He keeps a just balance between the head and the hand.

Dr. Rabindranath Tagore when he had lately taken to painting, was badly criticised by the public who misunderstood him by supposing that the path taken up by the Bengal School painters, got support from his paintings. Even to the wildest admirers and blind worshippers of the Poet, his paintings proved very embarassing and severely taxed their devotion to the poet. They were actually unable to understand and appreciate the Poet's point of view in his graphic versifications, and they therefore failed to extend any warm applause to the Poet's 'criticism through painting'. People often asked the Poet about the meaning of his paintings. But he remained silent even as his pictures are. The Poet's paintings bear definite messages to the tenets of the Bengal School. He consciously and publicly put before them in all simplicity, the last stage towards which the extreme idealists of the Bengal School were dragging the Subjective Indian Art. His paintings appear to be child like but they are not childish. His paintings are not reproductions of the existing forms in Nature. That they may have chance resemblances to forms of flowers, animals, or human bodies, is more a matter of accident than of design. Nor they have any deliberate aim or intention to produce any definite kind of ideas. In short the Poet's paintings are neither of forms nor as embodiments of ideas and, therefore, the Poet gave no descriptive titles to his paintings. His paintings only suggest the ultimate stage of the pictorial art of the Bengal School, or in other words they are the final result of distortion of external forms. The Poet gave a practical lesson to them who adulate the Bengal School with their outburst of wondering.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

Regarding the ideal of Indian Art, the Poet's paintings suggest that there must not be any change; for there is no truth in the ideal of an Art which changes when it alteration finds. The future of Indian Art lies in adopting the ideal common to both the Subjective and Objective Schools. None of the Schools ever believed in Art for Art's sake like their misrepresentatives of to-day. Indian sculptures and paintings whether Subjective or Objective have always been brought forth for the sake of the Ekamev-advitiyam. The Poet retained that ideal and preached that the highest work of Art is that which reveals the profoundest vision of the Ekamev-advityam in the most effective form.

The Poet's paintings, I think, advocate for the 'Idealised Realism in Art'—that is, Art consists in intelligently working up a desired form on a natural material, making manifest what is hidden or potential. Indian Art should neither aim at giving a distorted picture of the world as it exists in the mind of the tenets of the Bengal School, nor as it is beheld by the photographers and the modern 'Popular Artists.' Realism in the photographic sense has no place in Idealised-Realism. The photographer is hampered in not being able to leave out the unwanted; to be able to omit is the Artist's privilege. Nature overwhelms us by super abundance, by her magnitudes and her minutiae, and baffling subtleties and her changeableness. All is in flux, but the Artist is able to arrest the fleeting, to combine and arrange forms in a particular way so that the expression may convey to the onlooker what the Artist meant to say and produce the same effect upon him. The waning power of an Artist is shown when he only indicates in a vague and sketchy manner those parts of his picture which should be closely imitated from nature. Art has an universal medium of instruction and the highest work of Art is able to touch the emotions and win the sympathy of cultivated people of every age and clime. It is surely the hall-mark of all great Art, that it possesses the inevitability which does convince. The artist is expected to have a natural genius for noticing things and the power to feel and bring out from the world of his contemplation the super-sensuous spiritual beauties which lie hidden in the hearts of men, nature, and things. The figures, the trees, the flowers, the birds are all taken by him from the condition of natural life, but his representation shows every little detail as a gesture to God so that man sees Him in everything. It is because universal ideas spontaneously blossom out in the Artist's mind that his message is meant not for a particular country or a group but for the audience hall of the whole world.

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Presevation Foundation, Chandigarh